FOREWORD

THE LATE DR. JUSTIN E. ABBOTT

By J. F. Edwards

A Personal Tribute

On Tuesday morning, June 21, 1932, while this book was going through the press, we received a cable stating that Dr. Justin E. Abbott had passed away at Summit, New Jersey, U. S. A. on Sunday, June 19, in his 79th year. When Dr. Abbott left India on April 1st, 1910, he had spent forty years in India, during twenty-five of which he was English editor of the *Dnyanodaya*. In 1920 Dr. and Mrs. Abbott returned to India for a visit during which Mrs. Abbott passed away at Miraj on June 26, 1921. After his return to America during that same year the lonely scholar lived among his many books in the lovely home at Summit, save for those visits he paid to Europe in the interests of the helpless lepers in whom he took such a deep interest. For the work among these lepers Dr. Abbott gave munificent donations, as he did also to other worthy causes, especially medical work at Wai and Miraj. One of his gifts in early 1930 was of Rs. 15,000 for the Reading Room and Library of the New Gokhale Hall, Poona, the Deccan Sabha headquarters for social and political reform in Western India. One of the many enterprises nearest to the hearts of Dr. and Mrs. Abbott was the institution founded by them and named the Clarke-Abbott School and Little Boys' Home, now in the capable charge of Mr. and Mrs. T. Buell at Byculla. Another of the causes owing a great debt to our learned friend was the cause of Marathi Bible revision in which

for a large number of years he took a leading part in intimate association with the late Dr Mackichan who predeceased him by only a few weeks. One of the present writer's most stimulating memories will be that of a month's Marathi study in Dr Abbott's home in America two and a half years ago We like to think of him as we last saw and heard him which was in the great Presbyterian Church in Fifth Avenue, New York, where the frail scholar, full of years and of ancient lore, was reading a paper he had prepared for the annual meeting of the American Mission to Lepers, those friends of need whom he never forgot 'I was sick and ye visited Me :' those words of Jesus have had few more beautiful illustrations than are provided by the last few years of Dr. Abbott's long and busy life

Dr. Abbott's Best Legacy

Fearlessness and modesty were two of the outstanding traits of Dr Abbott's Christian character In the last article from his pen as English editor of the *Dnyanodaya* on March 31, 1910, he said 'The editor who dreads criticism, and so follows the path of least resistance, is not worthy to be a leader of thought The greatest privilege of our twenty five years of editorship of this paper, we count that of holding up to Indian thought the ideals that Christ brought to the world Mindful though we are of the many noble ideals to be found in India's sacred literature and in the lives of her spiritually great men, yet Christ does stand supreme, and the world will not and cannot reach its goal until it makes Christ the ideal of its life' As for his modesty, this was in grave danger of preventing him from committing to paper his vast knowledge of the treasures of Marathi literature, and so robbing others of this knowledge In this connection we may be permitted to divulge the secret of what led him to over-

come this natural modesty by beginning his invaluable series of books on the Poet Saints of Maharashtra During his visit to India in 1920–21 we became convinced that some special plan was necessary to overcome his deep shrinking from writing on the subject During a visit to 'Norheim' at Mahableshwar just before the Christmas of 1920, we set ourselves to win Mrs Abbott s able co-operation in persuading the learned doctor to write a simple series of articles on the subject, as the beginning for a series of books To our delight he promised to undertake the task which he began three months later by contributing a column each week to the *Dnyanodaya.* He was in the middle of the series when the death of Mrs Abbott took place, but so solemnly did he regard his promise that when the articles finished he began his series of books which are now the most authoritative English translations of the Marathi poets, and which are an indispensable part of the library of every worker among the Marathi speaking people. They can all be obtained at Mr N. R Godbole, 627 Sadashiv Peth, Poona, 2 Here are their titles with prices in brackets *Bhanudas* (Rs. 1), *Eknath* (Re 1/8), *Bhikshugita* (Re 1/8), *Dasopant Digambar* (Re. 1/8), *Bahinabai* (Re 1/8), *Stotramala* (Re 1/12), *Tukaram* (Re 1/8) The present volume *Ramdas* is published at Rs 2 As to future volumes, see below. This remarkable series of books with their literary notes (theology being almost entirely excluded), constitutes a splendid legacy and we can imagine the dying scholar offering up one of his favourite prayers, that of Dnyaneshwar at the close of his commentary on the *Bhagavadgita*. 'And now may God be pleased with this my offering of words. And being pleased may He give me this favour in return that the crookedness of evil men may cease, and that the love of goodness may grow in them'

Dr. Abbott s Last Will and Testament

Space forbids printing the whole of Dr. Abbott's last will and testament, and, moreover, several items are intimately personal, but a part of it reads as follows ·

'I wish my body to be cremated. I wish my ashes should be brought back to my home, and there without any ceremony my faithful gardener Leopold Carlson should scatter them over the lawn and flower-beds I do not wish for a grave anywhere. I do not wish for a tombstone anywhere Though born an American, long contact with the people of India has strengthened my love for them and their land I have chosen as nearly as I could their way of disposing of my body because I approve of the method and also because it is the Indian method' One of Dr Abbott's executors writes

'Everything was carried out as he wished. We had a simple service at his home on June 21st, conducted by Dr Brank the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Summit and Dr Abbott's nephew Dr Edward Dean who came from Nebraska The friends whom he wished to be invited were present as well as his brother, his nephew, his two great-nephews and their mother and Mrs Abbott's brother After the service his family, Dr Brank and I went to the Crematory and had the Committal Service in 'the chapel there The following day his gardener scattered his ashes over the lawn and flower beds as he desired Dr. Abbott's was a wonderful character and we will always remember the courage and cheerfulness with which he bore the long months of illness His friends in America join with those in India in gratitude for the privilege of his companionship'

In his last will and testament Dr Abbott bequeathed the large sum of 343 000 dollars to various friends and institutions he loved The amount available for these

bequests will be determined on the basis of the following important statement by his executors: 'At the time Dr. Abbott drew his will (August 11, 1931), his securities seemed to be sufficient to cover the legacies made by him, but since that time and up to the time of his death, his securities have very much depreciated in value, so that the legacies cannot be paid in full. As nearly as we can estimate, and this is only a rough figure, the estate will not total more than forty per cent of what Dr. Abbott figured it would be in making his bequests. The legacies therefore will have to be abated accordingly.' In addition to bequests made by Dr. Abbott to his deceased wife's special friends, his own relatives and servants and friends, among the latter being his Indian Pundit, Mr. N. R. Godbole, the following bequests each reduced to the forty per cent figure will interest the readers of this book; all the amounts are given in dollars :—

Dollars	
50,000	The A. M. Hospital at Wai.
20,000	The American Mission to Lepers.
10,000	Y. W. C. A. in Summit, New Jersey.
10,000	Y. M. C. A. in the same place.
15,000	American Oriental Society.
5,000	Overlook Hospital, Summit, N. J.
15,000	Sanatorium for Lepers in France.
30,000	The *Bharata Itihas Samshodhak Mandal*, Poona, for housing manuscripts.
5,000	The purchase of books for the Gokhale Hall Library, Poona, to which he gave Rs. 15,000 in 1930.
1,000	Social Service League, Bombay.
1,000	Mission for Depressed Classes, Mangalore.
1,000	Prof. Karve's Widows' Home.
1,000	The Servants of India Society.

1 000 The Seva Sadan Society
10 000 The Rev J F Edwards, for completing the translation of the Poet Saints of Maharashtra
10 000 The A. M Mission Nagpada Neighbourhood House, Byculla.
5 000 School for Coloured Children, Newark, N J.

Dr Abbott also bequeathed to the A. M Mission his beautiful Mahableshwar bungalow 'Iona,' with all its belongings The Clarke Abbott Little Boys' Home at Byculla was already provided for by the Clarke-Abbott Fund with the American Mission Board All his Oriental books he left to the library of Columbia University, New York

Dr Abbott s Magnanimity

In these days of Indian's national upheaval it has been a special pleasure to note the deep appreciation which so many Indian newspapers have expressed regarding the munificent bequests made in the will of the late Dr Justin Edwards Abbott and regarding the generous heart that inspired the gifts Our own desire is to pay tribute to the Christlike magnanimity of spirit which he displayed so conspicuously towards those who held different opinions from those he held A failure to understand this magnanimity lies behind the only harsh note we have observed in the Indian press comments appearing in an editorial paragraph of the Marathi *Kesari* of August 16 which translated into English conveys the idea that although the late scholar 'came to India for the spreading of religion, it was as if a doll of salt had entered the ocean to fathom the deep places of Hinduism but itself got dissolved in the attempt' Could the *Kesari* have heard his judgment concerning some of his critic s social and political views as we sometimes did, the 'Lion of Maharashtra would realise it was dealing with no 'doll' nor with one that had 'dissolved.' That his appreciation of certain *Bhakti* religious ideals

never meant that his disapproval of certain Hindu practices was any the less is shown by the following from his pen in the very last issue of the *Dnyanodaya* which he published after 25 years' editing of its English columns. Having written in no mincing terms of 'the unholy Holi' (just going on as he wrote), of 'this vile festival' of the Hindus, and of 'the vileness of its observance,' he went on to say:

> 'Perhaps sadder than the observance itself of the Holi is the apathy shown by those who should care for the moral elevation of India. Why is there no effort among those who pride themselves over their patriotism to arouse the Indian conscience to condemn the obscene revels, the drunkenness, and the filthy actions of the millions who abandon shame? India is not going to advance in any substantial degree when her millons grovel in filth physical and moral. The Holi festival is an exhibition of the distressing moral degradation of the Indian conscience. Some great change must take place before India can claim an honoured name as a nation, loving purity and righteousness'

An editor who in such words said farewell to India had hardly become 'a doll of salt dissolved in the ocean of Hinduism.' The tragedy is that the words are still so applicable to shameful practices in India today, the difference being that Indian editors are themselves now making the noble protest and that Indian organizations are seeking to banish such practices.

The 'Seva Marg' or Way of Service

We cannot refrain from giving the due meed of praise to one not afraid to say that many years of study of the Marathi Poet-Saints had convinced him that these 'vile festivals' of certain sections of the Hindus are departures from the highest ideals of their own teachers, and that in his own missionary work in India he had not sufficiently realized the help he might have derived from these teachers by recognizing the point of contact between their *Bhakti* ideals and Christian truth. This is the meaning of a con-

fession he has made in the preface he wrote a few months ago to this present book, the eighth in the Poet-Saints series There he states —

'I witnessed in India as all do the outer forms of worship in temples and by shrines but I had no idea of the ideals provided by the Marathi Saints both in their approach to God and their attitude to men Indeed I now see the mistake I made in my discussion in both my writings and in my conversations, expressing so confidently my opinions on the ideals of these Saints when I had not familiarized myself with the r history or writings It is rather late to do so but a confession of error is always good for one'

This does not mean that the writer of those words had changed his mind about India's revolting practices. The days we spent with him on our last furlough were sufficient proof of that and it is worthy of note that his munificent bequests include nearly a lakh and a half of dollars bequeathed to those Indian institutions, both Christian and those under other names, whose chief aim is the alleviation of these sad practices by *constructive* methods, and not a single pie in support of those noisier methods of a certain school of Indian politicians whose methods he so disliked Frequently (but in vain) did he urge us to correct what he deemed misstatements about India by correspondents to American newspapers One of his favourite religious expressions arose from discussion of the three-fold Hindu path, the *Dnyan Marg* (Way of Knowledge), the *Karma Marg* (Way of Works), the *Bhakti Marg* (Way of Devotion), in contrast with these he preferred to speak of religion as being the *Seva Marg*, or the Way of Service.

The Remainder of the Series

One of the sins Dr Abbott condemned most was 'the sin of the refusal of the brother's hand to those who happen to think differently.' These are among his farewell words in the *Dnyanodaya* of 1910 and this same magnanimity of spirit is illustrated in the list of names he inserted in his

last will and testament as indicating the friends he wished to be present at the last simple solemn rites over his emaciated frame, for they included the names of those who held diametrically opposite religious views from his own And despite all his theological differences, despite also his profound appreciation of many *Bhakti* ideals of the Marathi Poet Saints, he wrote in his editorial farewell to India in 1910 'Christ is the most complete revelation of the moral character of God, and hence furnishes the supreme ideal of the moral and spiritual that man can aim for' To ourselves the most striking illustration of all regarding his magnanimity towards those from whom he differed is the fact that he has requested us to complete the series on the Marathi Poet Saints, for he knew there were polar differences between him and ourselves in the realm of theology The thought of those differences nearly caused us to decline the heavy task laid upon us, but we have accepted it because we are convinced that a knowledge of the religious literature of the Indian people is more than ever before an essential qualification for a missionary to India, and also because the more we come to know of this literature the more are we convinced of India's need of Christ and of His power to satisfy India's aching heart. The remaining volumes of this Poet Saints series, two of which are ready for the press, will be published as soon as they can be prepared We append below some resolutions and press tributes. *J F Edwards*

RESOLUTIONS AND PRESS TRIBUTES

Dr Abbott's Work on the Bible

The General Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Bombay Auxiliary, has recorded the following appreciation —"The chairman and members of the Bombay Auxiliary of the Bible Society note with extreme

regret the passing of the Rev Justin Edwards Abbott, D D. on June 19th in America He was a missionary of the A. B C F M whose missionaries from the beginning have taken an active interest in the work of the Society, particularly in translation work and the revision and publication of the vernacular Bible The Society now places on record its gratitude for and appreciation of the service rendered by the late scholar, philanthrophist, author, journalist and friend of India, the Rev. Dr J. E. Abbott who was a member of the Auxiliary Committee for thirty years, and especially for the leading part he took, in intimate association with the late Dr. Mackichan, in the revision of the Marathi Bible in which he was engaged for many years'

The Deccan Sabha Resolution

'The Council of the Deccan Sabha places on record its deep grief at the death of the Rev Justin E Abbott, M A., D D, who was a gentleman of wide and catholic views. His munificent gift towards the erection and equipment of the Deccan Sabha Library in the Gokhale Hall greatly facilitated the Sabha's task in the matter of the completion of the Gokhale Hall building The Sabha offers its sincere condolences to Dr Abbott s family in their bereavement.'

Resolution of the Social Service League, Bombay

'This meeting of the Managing Committee of the Social Service League, Bombay, places on record its deep sense of loss in the death of the Rev Justin E Abbott who was a supporter of the League for a number of years and although far away in America always remembered the League when distributing his annual charities, and, further, this meeting authorizes the General Secretary to forward this resolution to the nearest relatives of the late Dr Abbott

The Indian Social Reformer's Tribute

'When a man after a life lived in the pursuit of great aims dies at the age of 79 the appropriate feeling is one of praise and thankfulness and not one of grief. After forty years of active work among us in the American Marathi Mission, Justin Abbott retired many years ago to his native country. He made his home at Summit, New Jersey, and there he devoted himself to the study and translation into English of the Maratha Saints. Ranade said that these saints were a potent force in the great movement which in its political aspect found expression in the Maratha Empire of Shivaji. Abbott's translations show an insight into and sympathy with the spirit of the saints of Maharashtra, which is impossible to one who adhered to the exclusive views general among the generation of worthy Christian missionaries which is passing away. Abbott wished and intended these admirable translations to be his contribution to the better understanding of India, and particularly of Maharashtra, by the English speaking world. He concluded with a touching tribute to the spiritual greatness of the Indian saints, his introduction to the *Stotramala* or collection of hymns from their writings, the manuscript of which he completed on Christmas Day, 1928. "It is my 75th birthday," he wrote. "On Christmas Day in 1853 I came, I know not whence, into this world. My Hindu friends may perhaps picture for me some other birth, though which I have passed. I will not quarrel with them, but I know not whence I came. As I approach the years of the utmost uncertainty, and know full well that few live beyond the age of 75, I want to make a gift to India on Christmas Day. I give this book to the land and the people I love. It is a small gift, but India has some beautiful stories of small gifts given, and accepted in the generous spirit that made them great. The handful of rice of poor Sudama and his wife, given to Krishna out of

love, is the beautiful picture of ideal gifts and ideal receiving of gifts.' Mr Edwards in the *Dnyanodaya*, which Justin Abbott edited for over a quarter of a century, concludes his appreciation of the latter's life with one of the favourite prayers, that of Dnyaneshwar at the close of his commentary on the *Bhagavadgita*. "And now may God be pleased with this my offering of words And being pleased may He give me this favour in return, that the crookedness of evil men may cease, and that the love of goodness may grow in them" Justin Abbott's life and work is one and not the least of many auspicious signs of growing concord among men of true religion. It is a high privilege to have known him'

Indian Social Reformer, July 2, 1932

'The Servant of India' on Dr Abbott s Bequests

'THE great love that the late Rev Dr Justin E. Abbott cherished for India and, in particular, the Maharastra is shown by the bequests he made to several institutions in India in his last will and testament The beneficiaries include several institutions in Poona and among them the Servant of India Society to which he left $1000 The fact that his property has since depreciated in value and the beneficiaries can expect no more than 40 per cent of the bequests does not in the least affect our appreciation of the large hearted and generous character of the late Mr Abbott The habit of bequeathing property to public institutions deserves to grow in India, where it is not so strong as in some western countries The reasons are partly religious and deeply engage the religious faith of the people The belief that the obsequies and annual ceremonies performed by sons will save the souls of the departed from purgatory and secure for them peace and happiness and a place in heaven is a powerful motive with Hindus who, even if they have no sons, will

adopt them and leave them their property. There is then the equally strong desire for the preparation of the family line, which also leads to adoption of sons and the bequest of property to them. There is reason to believe that these forces of orthodox belief are gradually weakening in modern times and that public institutions for social service of one kind or another will share increasingly in bequests'

The Servant of India, Aug. 18, 1932

Thanks from 'The Mahratta'

'As there are bolts from the blue, so good things also sometimes take people by surprise. The will of Dr Abbott of the U. S A. is an illustration of this. Dr. Abbott breathed his last in June last. He had come to India first as a missionary. He loved the works of Marathi saints and himself published seven books on them in English. He very much appreciated the work of the *Bharat Ithasa Samshodhak Mandal.* He came to have a peculiar liking for the Indian people and he has directed in his will that his dead body should be cremated according to the Hindu system. In all, he has disposed of 3,43,000 dollars by way of charity in the U S. A. and in India. In India public institutions receive 1,40,000 dollars. The *Bharat Ithasa Samshodhak Mandal* gets thirty thousand dollars and the Deccan Sabha, the Servants of India Society, Nagpada Neighbourhood House, American Marathi Mission at Wai, and other institutions also, receive smaller or larger amounts. Dr. N B. Parulekar, editor of the *Sakal,* Poona, had the privilege of being acquainted with the great and generous Dr. Abbott and naturally the paper has published more detailed information about the will. There is no doubt that Dr. Abbott's name will be cherished with gratitude in India and particularly in Maharashtra which benefits more from his liberal charities.'

The Mahratta of August 21, 1932.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The five poet-saints who have contributed the most to the religious life of Maharashtra, are undoubtedly Dnyāndeva, Namdev, Eknath, Tukarām and Rāmdās

DNYANDEV'S great work, believed to have been written in 1290, was a commentary on the *Bhagavadgitā*. The knowledge of Sanskrit was at that time at a low ebb The common man could not read it That the ignorant, the Shudra and women should not be deprived of a knowledge of the *Bhagavadgita* he prepared a Marathi version of it, and a commentary that further explained its meaning At that time the commentary was undoubtedly in the vernacular of the common people But for the reader of today it is full of obsolete words, and few find it easy reading The commentary has the name of *Dnyāndevi* He is also called Dnyaneshvar and his commentary *Dnyāneshvarī*

NAMDEV is the centre of much controversy, as to his date, and as to whether there may not have been two or more poet saints of that name living in different centuries, but whose poetry is ascribed to a Nāmdev, a contemporary of Dnyāndev The Nāmdev poetry may perhaps be best described as an appeal to the religious emotions

EKNATH was a saint and a philosopher His great work is the Eknāthi *Bhāgavata* This is a commentary on the Eleventh Skandha (chapter) of the *Bhāgavata Purāna* Being a commentary, its subject-matter is naturally that of the *Purān*, but his comments are very extended and cover subjects that are outside of the *Purān* It is a rich mine of moral, religious and philosophic thinking, of a very high order

TUKĀRĀM is the poet par excellence of Mahārāshtra, loved by all, honoured by all, and a moral power in the Marāthī country.

RĀMDĀS was a saint of a very different type from any of the foregoing. Eknāth confined himself to his home at Paithan. Tukāram left his home to seek the solitude of the forest that he might get far away from his wife's scolding tongue, and sing undisturbed in his ecstatic devotions. But Rāmdās was a true lover of Nature. As a boy he loved to climb trees, becoming as skilful as a monkey. He loved to swim in the river that flowed by his home, and when refusing to be married he ran away, it was to hide in the depths of the forest where none could find him. Later in life, in the mountainous regions of the southern Marāthī country, his home was the forest where he baked his own bread, slept on the ground, found shelter in caves, made friends with the wild beasts of the forest, with tigers, bears, wolves and monkeys.

The translator is familiar with that mountainous region where Rāmdās loved to roam - Mahābleshwar, and its all-inspiring, awe-producing cliffs and crags reaching far below into the Konkan, the sources of the Krishnā and Koynā rivers, and Paralī near Sātārā, where he lived in his old age on that beautiful mountain top, in a house given him by King Shivājī, where he died, and where his ashes lie buried underneath the temple dedicated to Rāma.

Though thus living apart from men, going only into the towns to beg his food, yet men were drawn to him, and his disciples were many. He believed in organization. He was anxious that the worship of Rāma should prevail. To him Rāma was God-Supreme, who for the salvation of the world had become man a few millenniums ago, but who is ready now to come to the aid of anyone in distress who calls upon him.

Mr Pāngārkar has recently published a volume containing the complete works of Rāmdās His most important book is the *Dāsabodha*, a book that touches almost every phase of human life, and holds up ideals of moral rightness that cannot but appeal to the heart of every one I consider him India's greatest saint, and the story of him in the *Santavijaya* whether true or legendary, it matters little, is a mine from which jewels of noble thought can be obtained.

Rāmdās was a worshipper of Rāma, while Eknāth, Nāmdev and Tukārām were worshippers of Krishna. To them, both were essentially the same Both were *avatārs* of God Supreme but at different times in the world's history It is difficult nay impossible to appreciate the ideals of these saints without first becoming familiar with their writings I have lived many years in India I have read the Vedānta philosophy through Sanskrit. I have discussed religious problems with Pandits, with the simple farmer in his field, and with the wild men of the forest, and gained a certain amount of knowledge of the essential spirit of Hindus learned and unlearned But I was not aware of the flood of light that has come to me through the close contact with the saints through their histories and writings. I witnessed as all do the outer forms of worship in temples and by shrines but I had no idea of the ideals provided by the saints both in their approach to God and their attitude to men Indeed I now see the mistake I made in my discussions in both my writings and in my conversations, expressing so confidently my opinions on the ideals of these saints when I had not familiarized myself with their history or writings. It is rather late to do so, but a confession of error is always for one. Possibly, I might plead an excuse in that I led a busy life, and to read their writings readily requires hard study and the time to do so

but it is better to acknowledge my ignorance and gain the forgiveness of those whom I might have offended through my confident assertions, while claiming a knowledge I did not possess.

The completion of this volume brings me to No. 9 in the series of the Poet-Saints of Mahārāshtra. Hitherto Pandit Narhar R. Godbole has stood guard, as it were, to prevent errors of translation in my works. In the meantime he has been familiar with the history and writings of the Marāthā saints and after the publication of this book he will appear as my collaborator, we working together. My thanks are due to the Rev. J. F. Edwards for his help in reading the final proofs *

Justin E. Abbott

SUMMIT, N. J.
October 26th, 1931.

---

*My reading of final proofs in this volume began with page 177.
J F Edwards

CONTENTS

Page

RĀMDĀS

Translation of Mahīpati's Santavijaya

CHAPTER I

INVOCATION.

1. Victory to Thee, Assumer-of-such-forms-as-pleaseth Thee, Cloud-of-mercy, Pāndurang, Husband-of-Rukminī Even the Vedas do not know Thy limits, O Thou, the self-pleased Guru-of-the-Universe 2. In attempting to describe Thee, O God-Supreme [Devādhidevā], the serpent Shesha grew weary (in the effort). Brahmadeva even was overwhelmed with astonishment Then what can a mere man do? 3. In singing Thy glory, O Shrīpati [Vishnu] the descriptive powers of the Vedas and Shāstrās failed them They could not comprehend the limits of Thy being, and so were compelled merely to say: "It is not this, It is not this". 4 Thus Thou the Unconquered, the Lord-of-all, art to be recognized as appearing in the form of the Universe. But O Lord-of-the-Universe, Thou hast become *saguna* [possessing human qualities], in order to fulfil the desires of Thy loving *bhaktas*. 5 Thou, without name, without form, without *gunas* [*sattva, raja, tama*], without parts, yet possessed with a feeling of love for *bhaktas*, hast manifested Thyself in Thy marvellous *saguna* form 6 Thou, O Hari, hast taken the form of many an *avatāra*, and hast given protection to very many *bhaktas* Through the Purānas written by

Vyāsa, Thy praiseworthy deeds have become everywhere known 7 Now in this Kali Yuga Thou didst found the sacred city of Pandharpura and Thou art standing there, O Shārangadhara [Krishna] with Thy hands on Thy hips. 8 Thine eyes are directed to the tip of Thy nose. Thy two hands adorn Thy hips. Thy feet lie parallel on the brick Thy beautiful form is an attractive sight.* 9 The ignorant the simple minded and the pious come to see and worship Thee Thou dost fulfil the longings of their hearts Thou takest them across the sea of this earthly existence, seeing as Thou dost their heart's devotion 10 So now, O Lord-of-Pandhari give me the assurance that I need not fear and relate through me the stories of Thy *bhaktas* There is nowhere any enlightener of intellect, except Thyself 11 Thus placing complete confidence in Thee, I have begun this book, the Santavijaya [The Victory of the Saints] So through Thy favour O Vitthala, cause it speedily to reach completion. 12 O God-Supreme, Husband-of-Rukmini Thou art my intellectual faculty My poetic art is in Thy hands I, by name of Mahipati am merely Thy instrument 13 Listen now, you wise hearers how Rāmdas became the *avatāra* of Maruti and how he appeared on this round earth, to save the world. 14 I related his story as far as I was able, in the book called the Shri Bhaktavijaya but it was a very brief account I made no attempt at an extensive story 15 I therefore, now begin (the story of Ramdas) in very commonplace language through the authority given me by the saints The Husband-of Rukmini has given me the command and I am therefore unable to hold back the expression of my thoughts. 16 The World-Guru, The-Mine-of-Mercy, is very fond of the stories of His *bhaktas*.

* The above is a description of the image of Vithobā at Pandharpura

So He has seated himself in my heart in order to make me His instrument 17 Thus Pāndurangs is the real relator of this story, as also He is the loving listener He is the only one that gives remembrance to my mind There is no other 18 Listen now with due attention In the district round about the banks of the Ganga [Godāvarī] is the sacred village of Jāmba known throughout the world 19 The town clerk, a *bhakta* of God, possessed the name of Suryājipanta Rānubāī his dutiful wife was always obedient to the wishes of her husband 20 Although he was a householder, yet his mind occupied itself with the means of acquiring the supreme spiritual riches. He made a rule governing his speech that he would never speak an untruth 21 If anyone appeared at noontime he regarded him as if he were the equal of Vishnu He, generous in his hospitality would worship him in the authorized manner 22 He felt compassion for all creatures. He had supreme love for all the *bhaktas* of Vishnu If saints or *sādhus* came to his house he paid them due honour 23 Both (the husband and the wife) were very fond of the Purānas and of services of song in praise of Hari [Vishnu] The husband worshipped the Sun in body, speech and mind. 24 In the early morning after his bath he made his offerings to the Sun of red flowers red sandal wood paste accompanied with the appropriate *mantras* 25 He was constantly reading the *Aditya-hridaya* [a praise to the Sun] and without ceasing his mind contemplated the Sun with love 26 After doing all this he would make a thousand *namaskāras* (to the Sun) By them the power of his brightness exceedingly increased Consequently he never omitted them 27 Concentrating his mind he would every day repeat the mantra twelve thousand times In this way full twelve years having passed, he met the Sun in a direct revelation

THE SUN BESTOWS HIS BLESSING

28 The Sun was seated in His chariot, in His form of excessive brilliancy, as His natural apearance. Seeing the Sun, when by himself, Suryājī's heart was overjoyed 29 To the Sun, thus revealing Himself, Suryajīpanta made a prostrate *namaskāra*, and was full of joy 30 With hands joined palm to palm Suryajī stood before the Sun, and with heart, inspired with love, he began to praise Him 31 He said "Victory, Victory, to Thee O Sun, victorious in all the Three worlds, Thou Mine-of diamonds By Thy light, O Sun, the earth appears as if made of light 32 Through Thy assistance the great *rishis* perform their acts, and by the performance of their various sacrifices all the gods are satisfied 33 It is true that owing to the influence of Kāla [the Prince of evil and death] of the Kali-yuga very many are living untruthful lives and for fear of them the gods flee away, and the *rishis* go to Badarikāshrama. 34 But Thou art the ruler of the Prince-of-evil of this Kali Yuga. Thou art directly visible to all mankind From age to age events have taken place in Thy presence, O Nārāyana. 35 Other gods are imagined, but Thou art seen by the eye O Narāyana. I have in every way failed in my service of Thee but in Thy grace Thou hast given me this revelation of Thyself 36 No one can see the way clearly that leads to this earthly life and the way that leads to final deliverance . The sun listened to Suryājīpanta's words of praise, and replied: 37 "I am pleased with you. Ask me for some particular blessing Do not hesitate in the least. I will give you what you may desire" 38 Suryājīpanta answered "I am wholly content with having seen Thee. But my wife has a desire She wishes for a good son. 39 There are sons who are of bad character, fallen into sinful ways, and characterised by evil habits, who dishonour their parents, who grasping the weapon of harsh language stab them in their hearts

40 There are sick and short lived sons, sons that become relatives in the family line, sons who cause their parents pain Do not give us such sons' 41 Ranubāi joined her hands palm to palm and thus besought Him "A beautiful woman does sometimes give birth to an evil son, but I think that to be a barren woman would be better than that' 42 After listening to the words of both, Nārāyana smiled and said 'According to one's actions one receives results 43 Your religious activities have been very pure, and therefore I am manifesting myself to you to-day You will assuredly have two sons, both *bhaktas* of God 44 The son, who will be a portion of myself, will carry on both worldly pursuits and the pursuit of the supreme spiritual riches. And he will always be ready to serve you with affection. 45 The younger son, who will be wholly a portion of Māruti, will possess the characteristic of indifference to worldly things Stressing *bhakti* and knowledge, he will save the whole world 46 Thus speaking the Sun vanished from sight The couple felt great joy and both took comfort. 47. There are those who perform austerities and other religious rites, and the divinities grant them favour But after their heart's desire has been fulfilled, they drop the worship of that divinity 48 Not so this couple. Their *bhakti* was without desires, and was accompanied with love They observed the festival of Rathasaptami (the 7th day of the bright half of Māgha (February), and their worship extended over the seven days during which the Brahmans were feasted. 49 On every Sunday of the week they gave a feast to Brahmans and distributed gifts to them And when the wife conceived, her heart was full of joy

THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF THE ELDER SON

50 When nine months were complete a beautiful son was born, adorned with every noble trait and lacking in

none 51 The parents looked into the face of their son. They distributed gifts according to their ability They engaged Brahmans as Rātrivarga [Reciters of prayer of peace] because of their love 52 On the thirteenth day they placed the child in a cradle A great many women, whose husbands were living assembled to celebrate the occasion, and sang cradle songs 53 They gave these women the saffron and other fragrant pastes, and other gifts In their love for the child they named him Gangādhara. 54 Gradually he grew in stature In his seventh year he was invested with the sacred thread And now for the second time the dear wife became pregnant 55 The father provided Gangādhara with a good education. He sought for a family of fortune into which he could marry his son and all went to the wedding 56 In accordance with the boon of the Sun his house was full of fortune and all his relatives gathered for the marriage occasion 57 When Rānubai saw the face of her daughter in law her heart rejoiced Then taking the young couple they returned home

THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF NĀRAYANA [RĀMDĀS]

58 Rānubai was with child, but she suffered no inconveniences When her days were complete she brought forth a beautiful son. 59 At the time of the birth she did not experience the least suffering When the birth was reported outside Suryājipanta became full of joy 60 Brahmans of the highest rank assembled Auspicious music of sweet instruments filled the air For twelve days the festal occasion was celebrated, 61 The ceremony regarding the naming of the child was performed. His father feasted a great multitude of Brahmans He also fed all the Shudras of his town. 62 The beautiful child was put into his cradle Gifts were given to the women whose husbands were living and

with loving thoughts the name of Narāyana was given to the babe 63 After the Brahmans and priests had been made happy with gifts, Rānubāi called her husband apart, and whispered to him 64 "At the end of the child's spinal cord a little tail is to be seen, that is all the time waggling. I am amazed at it" 65. Suryāji replied "I remember now what the Sun said that Māruti would enter into your womb 66. The child is therefore an *avatāra* of Māruti who by good fortune has come through your womb But do not let this thing be known to any one" 67 The child was always in a happy mood It never cried the least bit Day by day it grew in stature, and with an extraordinary lustre to its body 68 In five months it learned to sit up In seven months it learned to creep When called, it would reply, giving his parents great joy 69 In two years the boy learned to walk and talk Not for a single moment did he remain quiet, always wandering in and out of the house. 70 He was nimble and agile in his actions, every now and then jumping about He would make his face look like a monkey's, with a grimace exactly like its 71 His mother used to say to him "Play only in our own grounds, hobgoblins are found outside They will make you afraid". 72 To this Narāyana would reply "Mother, how does a hobgoblin look? Show me one at once I will certainly kill it" 73 At these words of the child the mother and father would laugh heartily The mother would take the child up on to her side, and it would call for a drink from its mother's breast. 74 They made all kinds of playthings for the boy, but he never would remain indoors. He wanted to rush outside. 75 The mother sought to dissuade him "If you go away to play at a distance, a thief will some day steal the ornaments that are on you" 76 Narāyana would reply "Then, mother take off these ornaments. I cannot endure staying

in the house, I must go outside." 77. This he would say in his lisping words, and his parents would laugh in their joy. They remarked, however: "He will be affected by an evil eye," and so they waved over him the leaves of the bitter-nimba and salt (in order to avert the evil eye).

THE BOYHOOD OF NĀRĀYANA [RĀMDĀS]

78. When the boy was five years of age, the parents chose an auspicious time, and put him in school. In a year's time, he completed all the studies taught in the school. 79. In his seventh year the father decided to invest him with the sacred thread Jupiter was favourable to the event, and they began the preparations. 80. The astrologers announced their calculations, and appointed the day for the thread investment. Invitations were sent to all guests and all came to honour the occasion. 81. Sweet instruments made auspicious music at the door. The divinity presiding over investitures was duly installed. Brahmans were feasted on the occasion with many kinds of dainty food. 82. The boy's head was shaved, leaving a tuft of hair, and the mother and the son were feasted together and when the appointed moment arrived, Brahmans said to one another: "Listen now with attention." 83. The Brahmans repeated the names of the family deity, and invested the boy with the sacred thread. The musical instruments now pealed forth, the drums were beaten 84. After the distribution of the *pāna-supārī*, the people returned to their homes The sacrifices and offerings having been rendered, gifts were distributed to the officiating Brahmans 85. Such sweets as the *talave* and *lādu* in great quantities, as also cakes of different kinds, there were; and when the mother put these into her son's begging bowl, she was overwhelmed with intense joy. 86. Then some more women with the honoured title of wifehood put food into the child's begging bowl. The

band now began to play, and all were filled with joy. 87. The priest said to Nārāyana: "From henceforth act as a wise boy should. Earn your livelihood by begging, and study the Vedas. 88. When attending to the calls of nature, or when eating, never utter a word. Your body will be purified by the sipping of water. 89. Don't jump around too much. Do not climb trees." To this Nārāyana replied, and I ask you to listen to the reply with respect. 90. "I will beg, and thus obtain my food. I will learn to repeat the Vedas, but I cannot bear the thought of not climbing trees." 91. Thus spoke the little student, and all the Brahmans laughed. Said they: "He appears to be uncontrollable. We do not know what he will do." 92. In this manner the investiture was carried out. The feasting of Brahmans lasted for four days. Generous gifts were distributed to all the Brahmans. 93. Gifts were then given to the relatives and intimate friends; they then took leave of Sūryājipanta and returned to their homes. 94. Nārāyana now sat daily with the family guru and committed the Vedas to memory. It was no effort for him to commit to memory. His intellect was extraordinary.

RĀMA REVEALS HIMSELF TO GANGĀDHARA

95. The name of Sūryājipanta's elder son was Gangādhara. He carried on all the familly domestic affairs, and all duties connected with his profession. 96. He took pleasure in his morning and evening devotions, in the study of the Vedas, in his worship of Vishnu, in *kirtanas* in praise of Hari, and in obeying the wishes of his parents. 97. Just as in milk, in nectar, or in holy river water the whole sky is seen reflected, yet the sky is not in the least touched by the water. It is entirely separate, wholly untouched. 98. Such was Gangādhara's mind. His body was seen environed by worldly affairs, but

his mind was absorbed in the divine form of Rāma. He lost all consciousness of possessing a body. 99. In order to worship Rāma, the Sun became an *avatāra*, in part (as Gangādhara) And how he (Gangādhara) lost all consciousness of body, one day, I ask you, good people, to listen to an account of that event 100. All the landowners were sitting on the stone platform, built around the sacred *pimpala* tree. The mayor, the officials and the *shūdra* servants were carrying on their official duties. 101 Gangādhara was seated among them with his ink, pen and the wrapping cloth. His appearance was beautiful, shedding light, and he seemed superior to anyone there. 102 After the business was finished the people returned to their homes, but Gangādhara remained in contemplation of Rāma. When suddenly the enemy of Rāvana [Rāma] manifested Himself. 103. His form was so brilliant and beautiful that it made the Sun appear pale Around his waist was the yellow robe, and in his crown divine diamonds gave out their lustre. 104. On his abdomen were the three beautiful creases. Over his lotus heart the ornament of the jewel Kaustubhā glittered. On his feet little bells tinkled. On his forehead was the *tilaka* mark made of musk. 105. When Gangādhara saw this Divine form before him, he embraced His feet. He could not contain himself for joy. God and His *bhakta* began embracing one another 106. Gangādhara's soul became a part of Rāma, and there remained to him not the least consciousness of possessing a body. The people had all gone to their homes, so that without any effort on his part Rāma could meet him alone. 107 While in this condition, even God no longer remembered His own Divinity. The *bhakta* forgot who he was. The illusion of duality flew away. 108 After a while Gangādhara came to consciousness and looking with his open eyes he saw before him Rāma, Sitā, Lakshmana, and Hanumānā.

109 Rāma then said to Māruti [Hanumāna]: "Gangādhara has become one with me in essence, so from now Gangādhara should be called Rāmī Rāmdās." 110. Having said this, the Cloud-dark Rāma vanished out of sight. And God, the self-pleased Guru-of-the-world, took away from Gangādhara the illusions of this worldly life 111. Then he remembered, and said to himself: "My mother and father must be waiting for me. I must hasten home" And with that he hastily arose. 112. Two *ghaṭikās* of the night had already passed when he reached home. His father at once asked him why he was so late? 113 Gangādhara whispered in private to him: "Today Rāma conferred a great favour on me. He has changed my name, so no longer call me Gangādhara 114. My soul became one with Rāma, and, therefore, He gave me the name of Rāmī Rāmdās." Such was the account he gave to his father. 115. And as Sūryājīpanta looked closely at him, he remarked. "His appearance seems changed. One cannot express one's joy in words. His good fortune has no limit". 116. And when Rāmī Rāmdās looked at Nārāyana he seemed to be Māruti himself, and he was filled with joy 117 After this Gangādhara wrote many books himself of which the one, called *Bhaktirahasya*, is known to the wise and saints 118 Aside from this he composed many verses on spiritual themes According to his own heart's experience he expressed them in words full of emotion 119. The nine days of the festival called Rāma Navamī, he celebrated with great joy Vaishnavas gathered for the occasion, and kept the loud music of the *kirtanas*. 120 Feasting the Brahmans continued during the festival. On the tenth day there were dramatic representations of Rāma's doings, and saints and *mahantas* were glorified with hearts full of respect for them 121. And Rāma made it possible for him to have his body in the midst of worldly things, but his soul seeking

after the supreme-spiritual riches. In this way even through Him all the fears of this worldly existence vanished, and the idea of I' was clean wiped away 122 His soul having but one purpose, lost all desire Worldly riches and the supreme-spiritual riches both disappeared in Rāma. Anger and lust both vanished, and his love centered in worship 123 If Hari bestows His favour, He can change one s worldly riches into the supreme spiritual riches. What lack can there be in any home where Rāma is the one in control and who is in everything ?

NARĀYANA S [RAMDĀS] BOYISH PRANKS

124 It has already been related how Narāyana the younger son s investiture of the sacred thread was celebrated He was a boy always without fear 125 He was continually playing without control with the boys of the town If there was a tree difficult to climb, he would climb up to its very top 126 The boys would look up into the tree and cry out He is fallen, he is fallen ' But he would come down at once to the ground, and then go and sit on the wall 127 If there was a flat roof in the neighbourhood he would jump on it Even if there was an alley between of three or four cubits wide, he would jump across without any fear 128 The boys would sometimes say to his mother "He jumps about every where! If he should fall don t blame us" 129 The mother would say 'You dear one, how you succeed in your worldly affairs! I see no one in this town as daring as you are 130 You have forgotten how to read and write You take no thought of wordly affairs What am I to do with such a character as you have got?" 131. After listening to his mother's words what did Narāyana do but go into the corner where the earthen jars were placed one above the other and hide in the dark. 132 His mother

hunted for him all over the house but she could not find
him She sent men into the town to find him, but he was
not with the boys 133 Suryājī learned of this while
in his office In the meanwhile the mother went to the
pile of jars for something 134 It was very dark in the
room She could see nothing on the floor Just then her
foot touched her boy, to the great surprise of the mother
135 She exclaimed "What is here? A cat or a dog?"
"It is I said Nārāyana. "You do not recognise me?
136 The mother replied My dear boy, why have
you hidden yourself here? I have been hunting for you
my babe, everywhere 137 The master of our house
has become greatly concerned. Men are hunting over the
town to find you Tell me why you have hidden yourself
here 138 Nārāyana answered his mother I have not
been sitting idle here I have been thinking of how to carry
on one s worldly affairs but I do not see clearly how it is to
be done 139 Hearing her son s words, the mother laughed
and in her love took him up on to her side and brought
him out 140 She sent word to Suryājī that Nārāyana had
been found in the house. The father was full of joy, and
came running to his home 141 His wife told him what
had happened how she had found him sitting in the dark.
Suryājī said to her Don't scold him for this. 142 As
he grows older he will naturally grow wiser Hearing
this Nārāyana said to his mother What is it to be wise?
143 The mother replied "You must learn to bring money
and grain into the home Only so will you be able to
get a good wife You must think rightly 144 Thus his
mother taught him and he assented to it. Immediately the
next day he did something which I ask you to listen to
145 Nārāyana went to a threshing floor The farmer had
put his grain in bags. Each contained one and a quarter
maunds. He took up a bag and ran away with it 146
He went running as fast as the wind and the farmer could

not catch up with him Nārāyana dropped the bag of grain on the verandah, and said to his mother 147 'Mother, I have brought you some grain Store it somewhere in the house While he was thus talking the farmer arrived 148 He said to Ranubāi 'Your boy's strength is most remarkable He lifted up the bag and ran with it I am astonished at it. 149 I don't know whether he is an imp or a powerful demon One surely cannot call him a human being Nārāyana replied to the farmer "Why are you talking such nonsense? 150 Take away your bag of grain The farmer took up his bag and then was witnessed a most extraordinary thing Listen to it you pious ones 151 As he lifted up one bag another one appeared beneath it He lifted up more than fifty bags to the amazement of the mother 152 Nārāyana said to the farmer Take your bag and go My father will return very soon, and will give you a beating 153 The *Shudra* farmer hastened away With the help of men the bags of grain were piled up There was no end to them the men worked until their hands grew weary 154 By this time Suryājī returned and his wife told him all that had happened Said he You have given birth to an *avatara* But we must have the good fortune to possess him

THE PARENTS PLAN FOR [RAMDĀS] MARRIAGE

155 Thereupon Rānubāi replied We must arrange quickly for his marriage If we can get him entangled in the domestic life he will naturally remain at home 156 Suryajī approved of this proposal and searched for a family of high rank in which to marry his son The marriage was decided upon and the priest was sent for for the occasion 157 All the preparations were made Relatives were invited Garments and ornaments were made ready, and the musicians were chosen 158 The bridegroom's marriage procession was made up of large numbers.

The musical instruments began their loud sounds Camels, horses, and chariots formed a great moving procession 159 In the chariot the mother of the bridegroom sat The bridegroom made a beautiful show on his horse. The road was crowded so that there was no space in which to walk 160 When the procession of the bridegroom arrived near the town of the bride, they camped in a grove As soon as the bride's party heard of their arrival they came out to meet them and escort them 161 The music made by both parties made a sound that more than filled the air After the mutual welcoming, the bridegroom was worship-

with milk, to whom shall I give to drink save you ?" 191 As soon as the priest heard the cry that Nārāyana had fled, he stopped repeating the verses Said he 'In the midst of the auspicious the inauspicious has entered This is a most unusual happening 192 The bridegroom's party rushed through all the streets and alleys calling out Where has the bridegroom gone ? Some mounted horses and rode rapidly searching everywhere in fields and jungles 193 But Narāyana was nowhere to be seen. The mother and father wept The pavillion where the bridegroom's party lodged became empty The bridegroom's party had all run off 194 A great many had gone to hunt for the bridegroom but they all came back. They remarked that the darkness was intense as the moon had set 195 As soon as the sun rises we shall search for him and bring him back Do not mourn they said to Suryajipanta 196 He was a wild boy from the very beginning He has gone into some forest When the sun rises we shall search for him and bring him back." 197 When the horsemen and police said this the parents were quieted. Said they We cannot from now show any one our faces 198 Remembering the good characteristics of their child the mother every now and then burst out into crying My dear babe you are perhaps in some wild jungle 199 Wild beasts prowl through the jungles. How will you survive this night ?" Thus the couple spent the night in anxiety wishing for the rising of the sun. 200 There are three classes of people and they gossiped in different ways in their homes Some said Luckily the bride has not become a ruined cow Consider that thought 201 Luckily for the birde, Nārāyana had his understanding just in time For if the marriage had taken place she would have become a widow all her life 202 A Brahman woman , said another can have but one experience of domestic life She cannot marry a

second time She is of no more use than a broken piece of pottery' 203 There were those who answered 'The Fates are against the mother of the bridegroom She came to get a daughter in law, but the son has run away" 204 Others remarked "It is the boy who is deserted by Fate and Fortune though his father is rich He has pushed aside the full platter, and has run away into the jungle," 205 Thus the three classes of people gossiped among themselves, while the parents were in deep concern, longing for the sun to rise

206 In the next chapter the story will describe how Nārāyana [Rāmdās] met Maruti Mahipati pleads with his hearers to listen with close attention 207 Svasti. This book the Santavijaya, by merely listening to it, fulfils all the longings of one's heart May the God loving, pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the first delightful chapter

CHAPTER II.

STORIES OF THE SAINTS BRING SALVATION

1 Whatever may be the fruit of loving *bhakti*, or whatever may be the root of indifference-to-worldly-things or whatever may be the power of knowledge, all these can be obtained from a full account of the saints 2 There have been many who have become indifferent to worldly things, who have turned away from sensual things, and have become God loving *bhaktas* Their interesting histories have been listened to by all good people. 3 But here we have a story of one who, while the priest was reciting the sacred verses, slipped away from behind the marriage curtain and ran away, as soon as he heard the words of the priest, ' Sāvadhāna, Sāvadhana." 4 The saints have varied experiences One saint is not like another And their varied histories, when listened to, bring salvation to dull minds

UNSUCCESSFUL SEARCH [FOR RĀMDĀS]

5 At the close of the last chapter an account was given of how, when Narāyana was being married, he threw aside all thoughts of affection and love, and ran away into the jungle 6 Horsemen and police hunted everywhere to a distance of four miles Some sought for him every where in the town, but this *videhi* [One unconscious of body] was nowhere to be seen 7 The parents were anxious, and they could not sleep But when the sun arose they felt encouraged 8 Relatives and friends said to Suryajipanta "We have sent horsemen to hunt for him. Do not feel troubled." 9. But the mother sobbed and cried 'I will not now insist on his marrying Once let me see him, and I will not separate him from me." 10. The officials of his town now said to Suryāji "Let us now

return to our town" Suryāji replied "How shall I be able to show my face there?" 11 People replied "What is to happen will happen without fail Do not mourn any more 'All earthly life causes sorrow' This so many saints and sādhus have said 12. But we have sent horsemen to search and also men on foot accustomed to gain information As soon as he is found, they will bring him along, so let us return" 13 And so the bridegroom's procession, together with the father and mother of the bridegroom, returned to their town But those who were sent to hunt for the boy reported that they had not found him. 14 When the father and mother heard this report, they wept bitterly The elder son now said them "Do not now mourn in vain. 15 Nārāyana is probably happy You will meet him again sometime in the future Rāma is his protector, and he is the saguna avatāra of Māruti 16 If you had not insisted on his marriage, he would have remained here with us for life But that which has already happened cannot in any possible way be changed. 17. Mother, you showed me his tail That means he is the avatāra of Māruti, manifested for the salvation of the world 18 He will perform many deeds of which you will

ed Be he wherever he may be Rāma is his protector'
23 And with this thought the parents remained at home

MĀRUTI MANIFESTS HIMSELF TO [RĀMDAS]

Listen with reverence you' wise people to what happened to Nārāyana in the jungle 24 When Nārāyana ran away from behind the curtain he was thinking of the Lord of Ayodhyā [Rama] He who pervades the universe will protect him All the marriage guests were dazed 25 Although seeing Nārāyana running away he seemed to bewitch them all So if the Life of the-World will continue to show His favour how can there be any longer bondage to this worldly life? 26 The snares of *Māyā* cannot do harm to him who is protected by Rāma for in the past present future and for ever the Merciful to-the lowly is his protector

27 Nārayana [Rāmdās] had no clothes or vessels with him He ran away altogether by himself this *videhi* [One unconscious of body] He neither grew hungry nor thirsty This was most extraordinary 28 When he fled into the jungle he had the same feeling of joy as a deer would have when it escaped from a snare without effort and plunged into the forest 29 Or the same feeling of joy as a serpent would have when it escaped from the juggler and crawled into an ant hill in a forest Or like a parrot, escaping from his cage goes and sits on a branch 30 Such was Narayana s happiness. Said he I am well freed from the snare of a worldly life It was a dense frightful jungle where Narāyana was There were many wild beasts there 31 Tigers wolves and bears he saw but he felt no fear for he had the favour of the Life-of Janakī Rāma] to free him from all evil happenings 32 He wore a clout and his sacred thread He had nothing besides these He had no thought or hunger or thirst because his indifference to worldly things was so excessive

33. He thought to himself "I have of my own accord given up all worldly things, and have chosen to seek for the supreme-spiritual riches Now when shall I have a direct revelation of God, I, who, am so dull-minded and ignorant" 34 He then began to think how he should contemplate by himself alone, how he should worship without an image before him, how to make it possible to listen to the sacred books, and meditate on them and study them 35 How to make possible a direct manifestation of God, how to have a vision of Rāma in actual form and with the qualities belonging to Him? How to cross in safety the ocean of this worldly existence?" Such were his anxious thoughts. 36 Thus thinking in mind, his thoughts now turned to Māruti, and with the feeling of love he began rendering him praise Listen to it with reverence, you saints

37 "Victory, Victory, to Thee, the Son-of-the-Wind [Māruti] Protector-of the-helpless, Ornament-of-the-saints, Destroyer-of-the-sorrow-of-Sītā, protect me, Thy lowly one. 38. Rāvana imprisoned the gods, and caused much trouble to the saints and therefore the Husband-of-Lakshmi became an *avatāra* in the Sun's family line 39 In order to help him, the eleventh Rudra, Māruti gladly overcame Rāvana, and burned up the whole of Lanka [Ceylon]. 40 When Lakshmana was about to lose his life Māruti, without a moment's delay, brought the mountain named Dron Then why dost Thou not rush to my help? Thou hast cast me off in a foreign land."

41 Although he thus praised Māruti, still He did not manifest Himself to him Then Nārāyana devised a plan, to which the saints should listen with reverence 42 Said he to himself "One should abandon all love of his own body Then only will God give a revelation of Himself But I have kept my life happy I see that is the reason

43 With this thought in his mind, he broke off supple vines at once, twisted them into a rope with his own hands and fastened it around his wrist 44 He looked for a tall tree, and hang himself up by this vine-rope Then contemplating Māruti, he called out " O God, give me a sight of Thee 45 When Shri Rāma was going to His own home [dying] He entrusted his *bhaktas* to Thee Hast Thou forgotten this? Dost Thou not recollect this? 46 O Māruti, Thou alone art my mother, my brother, and uncle. It is in order to have a revelation of Thyself that I have left all my affections and loves 47. If Thou dost not come, I will no longer preserve my life Hearing this pitiful plea," Māruti appeared at a bound 48 It was a brilliant statue of light In his ears were crocodile-shaped earrings If one looked towards him, he had to close his eyes He looked as if he were the sun descended on the earth 49 Manifesting Himself in this form, and at once freeing him (Rāmdās) He gave Dasa (Rāmdās) a loving embrace 50 Maruti caressed him, and said ' Why do you sorrow? ' Nārāyana composed an *abhanga* which the saints should listen to with reverence.

1 My soul was in sorrow Then I remembered Māruti.
  And Māruti appeared before him at a bound
2 The ocean of this worldly life seemed about to overwhelm me
  When Māruti came making his Monkey cry of Bhu, Bhu
3 I have no one except Maruti Seeing my extremity He leaped to my aid
4 My soul is attached to my Māruti, and He has brought me comfort
5 Seeing His form, my eyes lost their unrest Says Rāmdās ' The form seemed that of Rāma "

51 Such were the first blessed words composed by Nārāyana and as Māruti listened to them, he felt comforted 52 Māruti said to him 'You, who are as dear to me as life why have you brought yourself into such an extremity? Come at once with me to Panchavati, and I will cause you to meet Rāma 53 You are a portion of me, so Rāma will give you His *anugraha* On account of His merciful character Rāma has no thought of duality 54 So come along to Panchavati for, there you will meet Shri Rāma' Hearing these words of Māruti, Nārāyana's heart could not contain its joy 55 Taking Narayana by the hand the Son-of the Wind [Māruti] walked quickly along Just like the Dawn and the Sun there was no thought in them of duality 56 Like a jewel and its brilliancy a pearl and its lustre Sandal wood paste and its perfume the two were one 57 As the moon and its coolness are never separated from one another so Nārāyana and Hanumāna [Māruti] were different in name only 58 Nārāyana came to save the world in this *kaliyuga* otherwise there was no difference between them There was no such thought as though they were two separate beings

-vami is being celebrated Rāma dwells here in person, and therefore they have come here to meet him 64. After half the night had passed, and the people had retired to their places, Maruti said to Nārayana "I will now cause you to meet Rāma by Himself alone 65 Then holding Narayana to his heart, the Son of the wind arose, and entering the inner sanctuary, opened his eyes and looked. 66 The form before them was dazzling with its light The divine jewels gave out their lustre. In His hand were His bow and arrows, in His ears were crocodile shaped earrings 67 On His head was a brilliant crown. When looked at, the sun paled before it Around His wrist was the thread heroes wear Around His waist was the belt that gave one joy to look at. 68 On His feet were the ornaments worn by heroes Around His waist was the divine yellow robe When the Son of the Wind saw Him thus, he made Him a reverent *namaskāra*

69 The Husband of Sitā [Rāma] said 'Maruti, why have you come to-day? And who is this whom you have brought with you? Tell me 70 You have left the bridge at Rameshvara, and come from so great a distance To this question of Rama Maruti replied 71 'In accordance with your command I have by a portion of myself become an *avatāra* And I have come that I may place him at your feet 72 Nārayana listened to this conversation between God and His *bhakta* but Rāma was not visible to him Listen to the reason of this 73 Unless a *sadguru's* hand has been placed on the head of the one seeking Salvation he cannot meet the Husband-of Sita [Rama] Knowing this, Māruti said to Rāma Give him at once your *anugraha* (evidence of favour) 74 At the close of the Tretayuga you bestowed on me your favour In the same way, O Rāma, save this Nārāyana 75 The Husband-of-Sitā listened to what Māruti said, and replied 'I cer-

tainly will" Then placing his assuring hand on Narayana's head, He gave him the *mantra* of divine names 76 The good that comes from indifference to worldly things, the good that comes from worship accompanied with *bhakti* and love, that good was given him as a gift by the Life-of-the-World, through His tender mercy 77 With this bestowal of His favour, Rāma gave him a direct revelation of Himself The joy, when God and His *bhakta* meet together has never been adequately described

RĀMA CHANGES BOYHOOD NAME OF NĀRĀYANA TO RĀMDĀS

78 Shri Rāma said to Māruti "From now on his name is Ramdās His mission is to save the world. 79. The followers of Rāmdās will in the future increase all over the world. Men and women will be led to worship Māruti and study his life" 80 The life of the world then took off his ochre coloured garment, and gave it to Rāmdas and said "I install you with this Carry on now your organization of disciple 81 In order to make my father's promise true I endured the hardships of a forest life The garments that I wore at that time I give to Rāmdās as a token of my favour" 82 As Rāma thus talked with them these two servants of His fell at His feet. Then taking His leave, the two left His presence.

83 They bathed in the Ganga [Godāvari] and in love fulfilled all other usual rites Their thoughts were

87 The loving Māruti recognized Rāmdās' state of mind, and both at once started to go back. They came to Rāma's temple and prostracted themselves on the ground 88 The Husband of Sitā said to Rāmdās "Why have you returned?" Rāmdās replied "O Sadguru, I cannot endure separation from you I feel sorry for you 89 O Rāma, if I can only continually see Thy beautiful *saguna* form, my soul will have joy Who will fulfil this desire of mine?" 90 Thus pleading with Rāma Rāmdās composed a hymn of eight verses I quote them in this Chapter, so full of love they are Listen attentivelly to them you pious ones

(Verses not translated)

RĀMDAS RETURNS TO TĀKALĪ

91 The Lord of Ayodhyā [Rāma] replied to Rāmdās pleading ' You have conceived a desire which I, Lord-of-the-World can fulfil 92 Whenever you contemplate Me in love, I, Rama, will meet you in visible *saguna* form, I will rid you of the illusions of this worldly life and point you to the easy path. 93 Go now with Māruti No longer be sorrowful at heart I shall always be close to your heart 94 The Husband-of-Sitā then said to Māruti "I have put Rāmdas in your charge. Whatever longings he may have do you supply them

95. The two servants of Rama made Him a *namaskāra*, and taking one another by the hand, started on their way to return to Tākali. 96 Rāmdās had seen God in His *saguna* form, and he kept that image in the receptacle of his heart, and hearing the story of Rāma s life he kept it in the receptacle of his ear 97 Maruti had composed a drama in poetic form, containing the story of the Rāmāyana, and he, having committed the whole to memory, sang its verses. 98 And Rāmdās would listen with earnest loving attention. At night *kirtanas* took place, and people came to

listen 99 Māruti would relate the story of Rāma, and Rāmdās would listen to it always. Rāmdās would then compose the story in Marāthi verses, and sing it in the *kirtanas* with great zest 100 His rendering of the story of Rāma was from God's blessing, and inspiration As people listened, it pierced their hearts, and let them to exclaim: "Such joy out of love, even Brahmadeva and the other gods do not understand"

101. Rāmdās was seen by men, but Māruti was not visible to any one. The two conversed in private and always manifested their intense love for one another.

MĀRUTI LEAVES RĀMDĀS

go Remain indifferent to wordly things Influence people to worship God by whatever method you are able 111 Maruti having thus instructed Rāmdas the latter made him a loving *namasl ura* and said I am always at your service Do not forget me 112 After this conversation the Son-of-the-Wind flew away and in less than a moment s time he arrived at Rameshvara

THE EVENTS AT TĀKALĪ

113 Rāmdās remained for some days at Takalī. He carried on daily *kirtanas* and people came to listen 114 Even pandits and Brahmans learned in the *Vedas* and its *shastras* came there from Nasik and pious men and women listened constantly to these *kirtanas* 115 He went around the town himself and begged his food and some people brought and gave him the materials needed for cooking a feast. He therefore feasted Brahmans and the feeding of the hungry was properly observed 116 Seeing his unselfish spirit every one began to honour him

There was a Brahman householder in the town who came as a suppliant to Rāmdas 117 He was one possessing devotion, knowledge and indifference-to-wordly-things Rāmdas noticed his character and at once gave the kindly hearted man his *anugraha* [*mantra* admitting discipleship] 118 His name was Uddhava Gosāvi He became most faithful in the service of his *swami* He put aside all worldly desires and in love worshipped Rama

119 On one occasion Ramdas the God loving *bhakta* made with his own hands an image of Māruti when suddenly the Son-of-the-Wind appeared in visible form and said Install me here 120 The leading Brahmans assembled and every preparation was made The idol was bathed with five nectars with every expression of love 121 The Brahmans repeated the *mantra* of installation,

and Māruti entered into the idol, and the idol appeared all bright to the great joy of all present. 122 Then worshipping the God with the repetition of Rudra they clothed him and adorned him with ornaments They placed beautiful garlands of flower around his neck to look on which brought joy to the soul 123 They marked him with the *tilaka* in their love They offered to him insence and lights and cooked food and in love sang his praises 124 Placing before the idol *pāna supāri* and the gifts of money, they all circumambulated the idol Rāmdās's heart was full of joy on seeing the Son of the Wind 125 Over a thousand Brahmans were feasted with various daintily cooked foods *Pāna supāri* and gifts of money were made to them and at night the *kirtana* began 126 Rāmdās related the story of Māruti as related in the Rāmāyana The night service continued until the fourth watch and then the wave offering was made to the Son of the Wind 127 All were filled with the spirit of *bhakti* Many people came to see and worship Māruti After Rāmdās had finished the *kirtana* he called Uddhava aside and said 128 "After your early morning bath regularly worship Māruti Make your round of the town begging and then feed the hungry 129 Preach to the people in a way that will especially increase their *bhakti* Do not trouble any one and do no have in your hearts the snare of material desires 130 Receiving this instruction Uddhava bowed his head on Rāmdās's feet and exclaimed "Your Greatness your command is my authority And you are the one through whom I am to accomplish this"

RAMDAS DISAPPEARS INTO THE FORESTS

131 That night Rāmdās performed a *kirtana* in praise of Hari and as he was wont to do repeated the names of God Then when half the night was passed Rāmdās got up and went out 132 Uddhava looked hither and

go. Remain indifferent to wordly things Influence people to worship God, by whatever method you are able 111 Māruti having thus instructed Rāmdās, the latter made him a loving *namaskāra*, and said 'I am always at your service Do not forget me" 112 After this conversation the Son-of-the-Wind flew away and in less than a moment a time he arrived at Rāmeshvara

THE EVENTS AT TĀKALĪ

113 Rāmdās remained for some days at Tākalī. He carried on daily *kirtanas* and people came to listen 114 Even pandits and Brahmans learned in the *Vedas* and its *shastras* came there from Nasik and pious men and women listened constantly to these *kirtanas* 115 He went around the town himself and begged his food, and some people brought and gave him the materials needed for cooking a feast. He, therefore, feasted Brahmans, and the feeding of the hungry was properly observed 116 Seeing his unselfish spirit every one began to honour him

There was a Brahman householder in the town, who came as a suppliant to Rāmdās. 117 He was one possessing devotion knowledge and indifference-to-wordly-things Rāmdās noticed his character, and at once gave the kindly hearted man his *anugraha* [*mantra* admitting discipleship] 118 His name was Uddhava Gosavi He became most faithful in the service of his *swami* He put aside all worldly desires and in love worshipped Rama.

119 On one occasion Rāmdas, the God loving *bhakta* made with his own hands an image of Maruti, when suddenly the Son-of-the-Wind appeared in visible form, and said ' Install me here 120 The leading Brahmans assembled, and every preparation was made. The idol was bathed with five nectars, with every expression of love 121 The Brahmans repeated the *mantra* of installation,

and Māruti entered into the idol, and the idol appeared all bright to the great joy of all present 122. Then worshipping the God with the repetition of Rudra, they clothed him, and adorned him with ornaments They placed beautiful garlands of flower around his neck, to look on which brought joy to the soul. 123. They marked him with the *tilaka* in their love. They offered to him insence and lights and cooked food, and in love sang his praises 124 Placing before the idol *pāna-supāri* and the gifts of money, they all circumambulated the idol Rāmdās' heart was full of joy on seeing the Son-of-the-Wind. 125. Over a thousand Brahmans were feasted with various daintily cooked foods *Pāna-supāri* and gifts of money were made to them, and at night the *kirtana* began. 126. Rāmdās related the story of Māruti as related in the Rāmayana The night service continued until the fourth watch, and then the wave offering was made to the Son-of-the-Wind 127. All were filled with the spirit of *bhakti* Many people came to see and worship Māruti After Rāmdās had finished the *kirtana*, he called Uddhava aside, and said: 128 "After your early morning bath regularly worship Māruti Make your round of the town begging, and then feed the hungry 129 Preach to the people in a way that will especially increase their *bhakti* Do not trouble any one, and do not have in your hearts the snare of material desires" 130. Receiving this instruction, Uddhava bowed his head on Rāmdas' feet and exclaimed "Your Greatness, your command is my authority And you are the one through whom I am to accomplish this."

RĀMDĀS DISAPPEARS INTO THE FORESTS

131 That night Rāmdas performed a *kirtana* in praise of Hari, and, as he was wont to do, repeated the names of God. Then when half the night was passed, Ramdās got up, and went out 132 Uddhava looked hither and

thither, but could not see Samartha* [Rāmdās]. People came to meet him, and asked for him 133 Uddhava replied to them "Samartha left here during the night and has gone Some went to Panchavati to look for him, but he was not there" 134 Those men who were truly given to worship, continually sorrowed for him In the meanwhile they worshipped Māruti, and waited for Rāmdās to appear

RĀMDĀS LIFE IN THE FORESTS

135 Turning now to Rāmdas, he remembered what Maruti had said to him, and so turned his steps southward, living in the dense forests 136 If he happened to find any wild fruit he would eat it at the noon hour He even ate the leaves of the bitter *nimba* tree, having gained the victory over his tongue 137 He acted as if he were possessed by a demon He felt no distinction between the honour or dishonour paid to him He remained in the forest at night, and felt no fear 138 Tigers wolves and bears in large numbers accompanied Rāmdās They dropped all mutual enmity, and listened to Rāmdās' loud repeating of the names of God 139 Aside from his waist cord and clout he wore no clothing and yet neither heat nor cold harmed him in the least because of his utter indifference to material comforts. 140 He said to himself 'If I die, so let it be But I want the favour of God Supreme" He avoided places where man's footsteps were found 141 It was a great joy, however, for him to see different sacred places and divinities If he found some beautiful spot, he would remain there for a night 142 Then in the early morning without letting any one know, he would rise and continue his journey,

* Samartha meaning powerful, great mighty was a name given to Rāmdās as a title Your Greatness Your Highness, etc Rāmdās, Dāsa and Samartha are the names by which he is known

Before long he arrived at Jejuri, and there saw the Husband-of-Mhālsā (Khandobā) 143 He next arrived at Moreshvara and there he worshipped Ganapati Further on he saw the mountain peak called Shambhu and quickly climbed it 144 He enjoyed having wild animals around him. He had for his mattress this vast world For his covering he had the sky There was nothing to hinder his simple life.

145 He conceived the desire of going to the Krishnā river He journeyed about, because he enjoyed it His mind was in a continual state of joy 146 As he walked along, he would repeat to himself the story of Rāma. The only listener was Rama Himself Who gives blessings to His *bhaktas* 147 The thought of Rāma was the subject of his contemplation It was Rama when he sat down, Rāma when he slept, Rāma in his waking moment, Rāma in his dreams, and in his dreamless sleep He had no other thought, but Rama 148 Said he to himself 'Rāma is my mother and father Shri Rama is my own dear uncle, He is my near relative, sister and brother. I have no one, but Rama. 149 Shri Rama is my family Guru, Shri Rama is my *supreme guru*, He will take me to the other side of the limitless ocean of this material life 150 Shri Rama is my tribal and family line, Rama is my family deity I have truly no one else but Him, just as an infant has no one, but its mother' 151 Thus sang Rāmdas in pity-awaking words and the Lord of-Ayodhyā [Rama] listened attentively, but unseen

152 While thus singing of Rama's deeds, Samartha arrived at Jaranda There was here an old temple of Hanumāna [Maruti] Ramdās saw it with delight 153 With true devotion Ramdas worshipped him, and the Son-of the-Wind was pleased. Said he to Ramdas "I will carry to an uninterrupted end the results of your devotion."

154 *Then Rāmdās composed a verse which I am glad to* quote in this book. Let the pious listen to it for it will destroy their doubts.

> When the King of Kings [Rama] went to His own place [*died*] He appointed Hanumāna to the duty of protecting So He always appeared when Rāmdās needed Him If any evil person troubled Rāmdās He would put aside his cont emplation and rush to his help

155 Ramdas continued his journey from there in ob dience to Māruti s wish and in his thoughts and con templation there was nothing but Rama 156 Rāmdās lived on fruit and leaves a visible *aval ra* of God He had a l eautif il body vith a fine lust giving pleasure to one looking at him 157 He ate what he enjoyed hence his body was strong So although he wandered about in the *forests day an l nigl t he was never in the least wearied* 158 He was in the company of tigers and wolves Bears *and monkeys played around him. All were moved by the* spirit of Rāma and all enmity was forgotten. 159 The indifference of Rāmdas to desires made him kick with disdain Riddhi and Siddhi [Personification-of Accompli shments] Even when he heard of the joys of Heaven he *was disgusted with them. 160 His love* was in the worship of Rāma He despised the thought of Vaikuntha [Vishnu s Heaven] and Kailās [Shiva s Heaven] He waved off as an offering over the feet of his *sadguru* the four kinds of deliverences 161 In this way this Brahmachāri [*Young chaste student*] worshipped with enthusiasm and love He was an *avatara* in human form in order to save the world. 16? *All creatures were alike to him* He never spoke of one as small another as large He was full of desire to meet with saint and the story of Rāma delighted him

RĀMDĀS ARRIVES AT MĀHULĪ.

163. Thus journeying along, Rāmdās arrived at Māhulī [Junction of the Krishnā and Venyā rivers]. In this sacred place he performed his bathing, and in his contemplation worshipped Māruti. 164. And Māruti met with Rāmdās in His visible form, giving great joy to his heart. Said he to Māruti: "I have no one to protect me, but Thou O Mercy-in-visible-form." 165. Māruti, the-son-of-the Wind, said to Rāmdās: "Now I want you to repeat the *mantra* of thirteen syllables with the full concentration of your mind. 166. After you have repeated it thirtyfive million times, Rāma will appear to you in person. In accordance with His wish compose books in Marāthi. 167. It should conform to the Bhāgavata Purāna. It should gather into it the meaning of the Vedas, so that by the mere listening to it the feeling of devotion may be aroused."

168. Thus instructing Rāmdās, Māruti vanished out of sight, and Rāmdās wandered about in the region around Māhulī in its forests. 169. He sometimes appeared near a town having a tiger with him, seeing which the people would run away, trembling with fear. 170. Boys, taking stones in their hands, would throw them at him, shouting: "The crazy fellow has come," and then they would run away, in all directions. 171. Thus having abandoned the hunts of men, this Vaishnava *bhakta* lived in an unusual way in the forest, but to Rāmdās' sight it meant peace. 172. Said he: "This is a suitable place for religious rites. I would remain here, always." Thus saying, this God-loving *bhakta* constantly carried on there the worship of Rāma. 173. The Husband-of-Sītā lovingly dwelt in his thoughts, his mind and his heart. In his dreams, his dreamless sleep and his waking hours there was nothing, but Rāma. 174. To people he seemed a crazy man, but possessed infinite mental ability. He did not let

any one know of it but it could not be hidden. 175 Supposing a *parisa* [touch stone] were lying in a jungle, it would seem to all an ordinary pebble But if a horse shoe came in contact with it it would at once naturally turn to gold. 176 In consequence if people would say There is a touch stone somewhere here ' So they would gather mere pebbles and apply them to horse-shoes But no change taking place their laboured efforts would be in vain. 177 Or just as a touch-stone in a dream so is a saint among men. The devout recognize him but to ordinary people he seems a crazy man

178 Rāmdas retired alone into the jungle and began his religious rites Bringing Shri Rāma s image into his mind, he repeated the *mantra* day and night 179 He repeated the *mantra* of thirteen syllables the cream of all *mantras* Just as Shuka the great Yogi, repeated his *mantras* in purity of heart so did Rāmdas 180 Abandoning all desire for even the highest form of Deliverance [Sāyujya] abandoning all care of his body he worshipped Rāma with love, for he cared for no one else 181 His mind forgot all about hunger and thirst Inactivity and sleep ran away from him Rāma filled his soul and he no longer had the least bodily consciousness 182 His love was in worshipping Rāma His body assumed a lustre The God Indra even began to fear lest Rāmdās should take his title away from him 183 And so he said to his *guru* The Kāla of the Kaliyuga is intolerable Who is he who in the world of mortals is performing austerities? Tell me my Lord. 184 The Son of-Angira replied Hanumanta has descended as an *avatāra* to save the world and he in his love, is worshipping 185 Indra was frightened by this and said " If he is making Vishnu the object of his worship, he will ask Him for my place and title So I shall place a hindrance in his way "

186. The true relator of the next chapter is the Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna]. Through His blessing Mahipati is describing the lives of the saints. 187. Svasti. This book is the Santavijaya. By merely listening to it, the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the God-loving pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the second delightful chapter.

CHAPTER III.

MAHIPATI'S PRAYER

1 Victory Victory to Thee Shri Hari, Dweller on the bank of the Bhīmā Thou art the brother of the helpless, and their advocate. Thou didst come to the home of Pundalika, and founded the city of Pandhari. 2 Simple-minded *bhaktas* have wishes, and Thou dost fulfil them The time does not matter to Thee, because Thou art merciful-to-the-lowly 3 When a *bhakta* with love begins to worship Thee, his care is then Thy concern. Thou dost keep many adversities away from him, and finally bringest him to the Home-of Final Deliverance 4 The saints have thus described Thy power, and so, with that same hope in my heart I express my prayer to Thee in many forms, O Husband-of Rukmini, O Panduranga. 5 O Lotus eyed one it is Thou who art relating the acts of Thy servant I am a dull minded person. My own mind bears witness to this. 6 But trusting in Thee, O God I have begun this book. Carry it to completion by Thy power I have no other wish, but this 7 If Thou bestowest Thy favour, a dumb person might repeat the Vedas The touchstone [*parisa*] may be found on a stony path. Thy power has been described by the saints 8 By Thy will O *sadguru*, a babul tree can become a Wish tree When clouds in the sky are dropping rain, they could sprinkle nectar 9 Such is Thy almighty power, O husband of-Rukmini Before Thee my wish is a very small thing. So now give me inspiration accompanied with love This is all that Mahipati is asking for

INDRA SENDS MOHINI TO TEMPT RĀMDĀS

10 In the last chapter we have had the intensely interesting story of Rāmdās being the *avatāra* of Māruti,

the noblest of Brahmachārīs [the chaste student], and a mine of *bhakti* and knowledge 11 His enduring ornaments were forgiveness, peace of mind and mercy He was free from all desires, and lived always in a forest 12 Riddhi and Siddhi [Accomplishments personified] were ready at his feet, but his heart was not set upon them. He disdained the thought even of joys of Heaven, and he had no longing even for Final Deliverance 13 He felt joy in no other thought than that of the worship of Rama He delighted in contemplating Māruti and Rāma. 14 Seeing this condition of Rāmdas' mind, Indra's mind became fearful Said he "He will by his worship gain the favour of the Husband-of-Lakshmī [Vishnu] and will demand of Him my place and title 15 Recognizing this possibility, Indra, consulted with the gods saying "In the world of mortals a hero among men has become an *avatara* of Māruti. 16 In all this Kaliyuga there is no *yogi* equal to him. The Recliner-on Serpent-Shesha [Vishnu] will take away from us our places and titles and give them to him. 17 To this speech of Indra's the gods at once replied "In order to destroy the effect of his austerities send Mohinī at once 18 In the Kritayuga the Mighty Vishnu's favour was obtained by contemplation In the Tretā Yuga Krishna was rendered pleased by repetitions of *mantras* and sacrifices 19 In the Dvapara Yuga it was by worship through proper rites that Hrishikeshī [Vishnu] was pleased, and now in the Kali Yuga the Dweller in-Heaven [Vishnu] becomes favorable by the repeating of His names 20 Therefore, His *bhakta* Ramdas is ever keeping in his mind the Lord of-Ayodhyā [Rāma] worshipping Him day and night, and always without desires 21 Therefore, listen, O King-of Heaven [Indra] he will certainly take away from us our places and titles , therefore, send at once some hindrance in the way of his worship 22 The primal *Mayā*, Mohinī, has

seduced many great *munis* It took but a movement for her to destroy the value of the austerities of the son of Gādhi and return 23 Get her ready, and send her to the land of the mortals and let her devise some scheme by which to seduce the heart of Rāmdās 24 To these suggestions of the gods Indra gave his assent He therefore said to Mohinī You have been able to seduce the Three Worlds 25 In that same manner seduce Rāmdās and make him subject to you And in giving this command to Mohinī Indra felt great joy 26 She adorned herself She took Cupid along with her in his visible form Spring time went before her and made the forest beautiful 27 Mohinī then followed along with Cupid. She began by singing sweetly in the forest while the gods in their chariots of light hovered over the scene and watched 28 In the mean time Rāmdas was worshipping Rama in the midst of a dense forest *Kāma* (lust) filled his heart and he had no consciousness of body whatever 29 When Cupid saw Ramdas he was alarmed That deceitful fellow remembered some past events and remarked Shiva was angry with me 30 He opened his third eye and burned me to ashes I feel a certainty in my heart that the same thing will take place at this time 31 Māruti the chaste Brahmachārī *avatara* of Shiva is lovingly protecting Rāmdās in many ways 32 If I enter into his heart I shall in a single moment, be burned to ashes With this fear in his mind Cupid sat still 33 But lust cannot come near him in whose heart and mouth Rāma is for Rāma is the resting place for every heart and He gives His love to His servants. 34 Springtime had adorned the forest. The forest was beautiful with flower and fruit and when Samartha saw all this he understood its inner purpose 35 Indra has surely sought to put hindrance in my way thought Rāmdās, and then holding his mind to peaceful thoughts he composed words of blessing

(*Abhanga* not translated)

36 Having uttered those words he added "Aside from Rama, the creator and destroyer of fear, the Life-of-the-world, I have no one 37 Rāma is the divinity to whom I pray. Shri Rama is my pure, supreme-spiritual-riches He is truly my worship, my austerities and religious rites, and without Him I have no one 38 Shri Rāma is the law of my family line Shri Rāma is my good deeds. Shri Rāma is my daily rule, it is He who removes from me the illusions of this physical world. 39 Shri Rāma is the means of my union with God, Shri Rāma is my worship, my austerities and contemplation Without Shri Rama I should never know whom to worship, not even in my dreams 40 Shri Rāma is my unending contemplation Shri Rama is my good heart There is no means for perfect purity except through Shri Rāma 41 Shri Rama is my *salokatā, samipatā svarupatā and sāyujyatā* (four stages of final Deliverance) 42 Shri Rama, is my religious rites, Shri Rama is my worship and contemplation. Shri Rama is the *Brahma* of old. I know no one, but Him"

43 With such words Ramdas prayed, with feelings of love He looked at the Three-worlds from the spirit point of view He did not recognize its material aspect 44 In the mean while Primal *Māyā*, the Temptress-of-the-Universe, was singing her songs in the forest, and gods in their chariots of light were listening, themselves bewitched. 45. She danced in varied postures By gestures, and movements of her eyes she let loose her love arrows, and in her beautiful form she came close to Rāmdās 46 The *Vaishnava bhakta* seeing her near severely rebuked her 'Away with you,' he exclaimed "Go away at once Why are you wearing yourself in vain?" 47 Hearing Samartha's rebuke, she became ashamed. The gods, however, ex-

claimed 'Blessed, blessed,' and showered flowers upon him. 48 The Son of-Angirā said to Indra "Your attempts at hindrance are of no avail before a *bhakta* of Vishnu, Rāmdās is a *Vaishnava*, a full *avatāra* of Māruti. 49 This same thing occurred when Nārāyana was worshipping at Badrikāshrama Indra attempted to hinder him, but his heart was unmoved' 50 Thus expressing themselves on this occasion, the gods returned to their abodes The temptress Mohini, ashamed of her failure, reentered her heavenly home

MĀRUTI AGAIN REVEALS HIMSELF TO RĀMDĀS

51 Following the above event, Samartha [Ramdās] began his contemplation of Maruti As he brought Māruti to his mind in less than a moment He arrived. 52 Rāmdās tightly embraced the feet of the slave of Rama [Maruti] In their mutual embrace the idea of their duality disappeared 53 In the two thus together, one seemed the body and the other the soul Or the one the ear, and the other the listening There was no real difference whatever 54 Or as there is no difference between the eye and the divinity [the object of sight], or between the nose and the one smelling or as there is no difference between the tongue and the expression of thought, so there was no difference between the two. 55 So Rāmdās and Maruti were indifferentiated in their unity, and as *avatāras* had descended to this earth for its salvation. 56 Ramdas told Māruti how Mohini had attempted to harm him Māruti replied "Blessed blessed are you May Rāma continue to bless you' 57 After Rāmdās had worshipped Maruti, the two feasted on the wild fruit Both were supremely happy, engrossed in the worship of Rāma. 58 Māruti then took leave of Rāmdās and vanished out of sight

RAMDAS SEEKS A REVELATION OF RĀMA

Let saints now listen with reverence to what happened after the above events 59 Rāmdās continued his

austerities in the forests along the banks of the Krishnā river He lived on bulbs and roots, and entirely rejected cooked food. 60 He held in control every sense organ, and concentrated his mind on one thing He refused sleep and all inactivity, and continually thought of Rāma 61. In his walking moments, in his dreams, and in his dreamless state, he thought only of Rama Twelve years passed in this way, and yet Ramdas had no direct vision of Rāma 62 In contemplating Maruti he had a revelation of Him thrice a day, but he had no direct revelation of Rama in his *saguna* form 63 He counted the number of times he had repeated the *mantra* of thirteen syllables, and he found he had reached thirtyfive million Maruti then said to Rāmdas 64 "Now fill your heart with love and continue to plead with Rāma That will be sufficient to bring about the wish of your heart Do not attempt other means 65. Among all the varied means, such as repetition of *mantras*, austerities, rites, ceremonies, sacrifices and pilgrimages, the supreme means is pleading with God with a repentant heart 66 When the *Vaishnava bhakta* in his distress called on Vishnu to come to his help God-Supreme [Vishnu] took pity on him and descended as an *avatāra* 67 He recognised the pleading of his *bhakta* He Who-reclines-on the-serpent Shesha [Vishnu] was pleased with him and not waiting for further time or occasion., He quickly appeared in his *saguna* form. 68 So listen, Ramdas In love plead with Rama He will, of his own accord, become *saguna*, of this I am fully convinced. 69 Thus Maruti explained with love the importance of *saguna* worship, and vanished out of sight Samartha accepted this form of worship, and composed pleading verses called *ashtaka*.

(*Ashtakas* not translated)

70 And as Ramdas, alone in the forest composed these pleading verses, the Lord of Ayodhyā [Rama] listened to

them in love 71 Just as a mother rushes to the cradle when her infant cries, just so, the Lord of-Ayodhyā manifested Himself directly, and in His *saguna* form 72. Jewels glittered in His crown as if millions of suns had just arisen. In his ears hung earrings in the form of crocodiles, and beautiful 73 His beautiful face was shining Around his neck was glittering the beautiful *kaustubha* jewel His hands extended to his knees Around his waist was the yellow robe 74 He who was the object of contemplation by Sanaka and others He, Whom Shiva worshipped held a bow and arrow in His hand, and His personal appearance was the expression of beauty 75. His lotus eyes were very large around His neck was the *vaijayanti* garland of jewels. On His feet sparkled the *vānki* and *vāle* ornaments He was smiling, and he had the lustre of a dark blue cloud. 76 His reputation is that of the Savior of the-sinner The Divine Sitā was seen standing at His left. As soon as Rāmdas saw them, he fell at their feet 77 Although there was no real separation between God and His *bhakti*, yet the two had not met for many days So with hearts full of emotion they fell on one another s necks 78 As the feeling of reverence and the feeling of loving devotion are the same, as a worshipper and his daily practice are the same so Rāma and His *bhakta* embraced one another as one 79 Or as Life and life-giving nectar are not different, as sugar and sweetness are not different as the sun and brightness are not different, but are united in one another 80 As the lotus and the sun's rays, as mother and her infant, as the moon and the longing for it by the chakor bird, what lack of joy could then be in their union? 81 So the meeting of the two, Rāma and Rāmdās, taking place after many days, God and His *bhakta* could not cease their embrace The Lord-of the-world then thought to Himself 82 "If Rāmdās and I become one in essence, then who will there be to long

for me, and then there will be no one to whom to whisper my secrets 83 Who will there be to call for my help in times of dire distress? Who will cry 'Rush to my help O God,' and to whom shall I be able to give a *saguna* revelation of myself 84 Who will instal a *saguna* image of myself? Who will sing of my deeds, and then how can the salvation of the world take place?' 85 With this thought in His mind, He turned, God and His *bhakta* back into two persons, for if the two became one how could a seeker attain its supreme-spiritual riches? 86 So for the good of the world God and His *bhakta* became separate Ceasing therefore, His embrace, He continued to caress His servant 87 And as Shrī Rāma s lotus hand passed over Rāmdās face a flood of love came into Rāmdas' heart 88 And he sat before God joyfully composing pity producing words There is an *abhanga* connected with that event One should make an effort to listen to it.

1 I am a transgressor a transgressor My heart is not fixed.
2 My sins are without number Who is there who can number them?
3 Thou hast in every way protected me Thou hast cared for me, Thy lowly one
4 Even though my deeds have been evil I, Rāmdās prostrate myself before Thee.

89 Hearing these words of His *bhakta* Rama replied 'Whatever blessing you ask of me that I will certainly give you. 90 Ramdas answered May my heart never forget Thee Give me continual love in my heart for the singing of Thy praise 91 Just as Shiva repented and repeated Thy names, so may I by day and night have Thy names on my lips 92 If I have any different wish I swear by Thee that I have not Hearing these words of His sevant Rama was pleased 93 Shrī Rama sa d 'My

dear *bhakta*, I am now to vanish out of your sight." Rāmdās replied "If I am in distress, who will be my protector?" 94 Hearing this, the Merciful-to-the-lowly replied "I am with you always I take with me the disk and the club, and will punish the evil ones, and the wicked demons 95 I gave them Final Deliverance at the end, even to those who treated Me evilly, but for those who persecute my *bhaktas*, there is no escape from Hell 96 In no way should any one give trouble to *Vaishnava bhaktas* who are my *bhaktas* If they do, there will be enmity between us. They cannot escape my anger 97. The Kauravas did no injustice to Me, but because they hated the Pāndavas, I destroyed them 98 I am *nirguna* (without qualities), without form, without acts, and indifferent to the various forms of worship, but in order to be the advocate of my *bhaktas* like you I become *saguna* and assume human form 99 For the sake of Brahmadeva I became a fish and destroyed Shankhāsura. In order to give nectar to the gods, I became the tortoise *avatāra* 100 Hiranyāksha gave trouble to the world, and by it all living things were suffering For that occasion I became a boar *avatāra* (Boar), and by my power killed the demons 101 When Hiranyakashyapu persecuted my *bhakta* Pralhāda, I manifested myself in the pillar, and tearing Hiranyakashyapu to pieces, I quickly rescued my servant. 102 In order to be Indra's advocate, I became the Vāmana *avatāra*, and depriving Bali of all his property, became his door-keeper. 103 In order to be the advocate of Renukā, I became Bhārgava, and freeing the world of all Kshatriyas, I gave it as a gift to the Earth-gods [Brahmans] 104 When Rāvana was giving intolerable trouble, I became an *avatāra* in the line of Sun-descendents I killed the ten headed monster, and freed the gods by my power. 105 Through the womb of Devakī and Vasudev, I became the Krishna *avatāra* I protected the Pāndavas in many ways. How

impossible to relate all the details ? 106. Hearing of the unhappy conditions in the Kaliyuga, I, Rāma, became the Buddha *avatāra*. But when distress falls on my *bhaktas*, I feel the weight of it, and in answer talk in love." 107. Thus speaking, Rāma placed his hand on Rāmdās' head, and the Soul-of-the-Universe communicated to him his divine and secret knowledge. 108. By those nectar words the heart of Rāmdās came to a state of peace. Rāmdās then placed his head on Rāma's feet, and felt his heart full of love. 109. Then Rāma, rising-up, gave his command to Rāmdās to plan how to save this world. He said : 110. "Live now near a town, and eat food obtained by begging. And if any pious minded person comes as a suppliant to you, give him your *mantara* as sign of your favour." 111. Saying these words to Rāmdās, the Life-of-the-world vanished out of sight.

In the development of the next chapter I desire the saints to give me their attention. 112. Mahipati is describing the lives of the saints, because of the assurance given him by Digambara [Krishna], Who lives by the bank of the Bhīmā, Whose hands are akimbo. 113. Svasti. This book is the Santavijaya. By the mere listening to it, the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the god-loving, wise *bhaktas* listen. This is the third delightful chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

EAGERNESS OF SAINTS TO LISTEN TO STORIES OF THE SAINTS

1 Just as ants swarm with eagerness on a pile of sugar, so hearers stand attentive to the lives of the saints. 2. Or just as jewel experts rush to the place where a box of jewels lies, so God loving *bhaktas* have assembled at this time to listen. 3 Or as when the ocean was churned, and eyes rested finally on the pure nectar, crowds of gods sat around anxious to drink it 4 Or as when in the forest of Naimisha, Suta was relating the Purānic stories, Shaunaka and other *Munis* sat around intent on listening 5 So you, wise *bhaktas*, are listening to my uncouth words, because you regard the story of the lives of the saints as the chief means of purification of the heart.

PEOPLE THINK RĀMDĀS A CRAZY MAN

6 In the last delightful chapter we saw Ramdās speaking to Rāma in loving tender words, and how the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma] met with him, having assumed a *saguna* form, 7 Rāma gave him his blessing [in the form of a *mantra*] and commanded him to save those men who were pious and God loving

8 Following this event, Rāmdas continued his worship in the forests by the banks of the Krishna river Wild animals of the forest and birds of the trees were always with him 9 The sky was his pavilion. The earth was his vast seat Here he thought of Rāma in his love, and here was his heart s delight 10 He used to rise early in the morning, and go into the town to beg shouting out · 'Victory to Rāma.' And then he would hurry along, as if possessed with a devil 11 From ten or so houses

pious people would give him some trifling gift of food, and then the giver of salvation [Rāmdas] would run away from there 12 Some would cry out "The crazy man has come Others exclaimed ' He is one indifferent to worldly things. Even if he was asked his town or name he makes no reply 13 After experiencing such treatment from men he would retire to the forest, perform his bath and then do his cooking Listen how he did it 14 Where there was water near by he would light a fire, then knead the flour on a rock and bake tha cakes on leaves, placed over the coals of fire 15 Having thus prepared his meal he meditated on Rāma and as he made his offering the Husband of Sita [Rāma] would present himself 16 Seeing the pure sincerity of his *bhakta* God would assume His *saguna* form the extraordinary sweetness of which even none of the gods know 17 He who dwells on the Ocean of Milk He whose devoted slave is Lakshmi even He Lord of the heart sat eating the cakes cooked on leaves This seems to me very strange 18 He the Supreme Vishnu of dark complexion who cares for this universe He ate such common food without distaste because He is Merciful to the Lowly 19 The Life-of-the-World was enticed by His *bhakta* otherwise what reason could He have had for doing so? Indra invited Him to drink nectar 20 But Shripati did not go He in His love for Rāmdās ate even the dry cakes cooked on leaves The gods sitting in the Pushpaka chariot of light looked on the scene wishing for but not receiving the favor of a portion 21 Thus God and His *bhakta* ate until their appetite was satisfied For the cleansing of his mouth Rāmdas gave him some *tulsi* leaves with which He was delighted 22 Having thus comforted His servant God vanished from sight or shall I say rather that the Life of the World made His happy abode in the heart of His *bhakta*?

KING SHIVĀJI GOES TO MEET RĀMDĀS

23 Samartha [Rāmdās] through inspiration now began with the composing of poetry He took pen and ink, and wrote on the *palasa* leaves. 24 After writing his verses, Samartha would carefully read them over, and Rāma, in the form of birds and wild animals, listened with pleasure to them 25 When it was evening, he would take the leaves on which he had written, and throw them into the water of the Krishnā river In its stream they would float away

26 While Samartha was thus living in the great forest after his usual manner suddenly King Shivāji arrived there on a hunting expedition. 27. Up to the third watch of the day, however, he had been unable to shoot any game The king was exhausted from the intense heat of the day, and his attendants became scattered hither and thither. 28 From fear of the king all the beasts had come for protection to Samartha. They had put aside all enmity between themselves and were wandering about without fear 29 Suddenly, however, the king in his hunt for game came to that place. And there he saw a great crowd of animals. 30 Tigers, wolves, bears, leopards, great monkeys, dogs rabbits, and little monkeys gathered together and were playing with fearless minds. 31 Among them the king saw the great man, and thoroughly astonished, he exclaimed "Blessed is this day" 32 The king in his astonished mind said "He surely is not a man. He must be God in part' Such was his decision. 33 To go at once near Rāmdās seemed very dangerous, because of his fear of these wild beasts, and so, from a distance he prostrated himself on the ground with feelings of reverence. 34 The king now said to his Minister "Let my soldiers cross to the other side of the river I wish to remain here alone" And so he sat there

for a few *ghatikās* 35 The king had a very great wish to go near Rāmdās at once, but he was afraid of the tigers and wolves And so, he did not come near Rāmdās 36. While in this anxious state of mind, the sun had begun to set, and so, the king with his soldiers went back to his camp 37 But his mind was in a disturbed state. Thought he "When shall I meet my dear *sadguru*? If my good fortune is rising, then only shall I succeed in meeting with him" 38 Such were the troubled thoughts of the king. He was unable to enjoy any mode of entertainment He was unable to sleep that night But finally the sun arose

THE KING FINDS RĀMDAS VERSES ON FLOATING LEAVES

39 The king performed his early morning bath, and as usual repeated the names of God He took a light breakfast, and then started on his way 40 He said to his Minister 'I have no mind to hunt to-day I want a meeting with that great man There is no need of many attendants 41. So the king started on alone, and rode rapidly He had no music sounding and soon reached the region of the Krishna river 42 Suddenly he saw Samartha with eyes closed, sitting worshipping Rama The king looked at him from a distance, and prostrated himself on the ground before him 43 He would have gone at once near Rāmdas, but he was afraid of the great tigers He would not fire bullets at them, for fear that it would anger the holy man 44 Just as a child has the protection of its mother, so Ramdas cared for these wild beasts "If I should cause them harm, he will curse me" 45 Thus thinking, the king sat still for one watch of the day Then said he to himself "When it will please God to favor me, he will fulfil my heart's longing' 46 Not seeing any way to accomplish his purpose of meeting with Rāmdās, he returned to the bank of the Krishnā.

A strange and seemingly impossible thing had occurred, seen by the king's secretary 47. He had noticed some *palasa* leaves floating along the edge of the Krishnā river. He could see writing upon them He put out his hand and drew them out 48 He read the writing, and the king saw him do so Quietly sitting, the king then listened to his reading They seemed words of blessing 49 Among them there were several forms of *abhangas* As the king listened he felt repentant, and tears of love flowed That indeed was a rich blessing 50 There were on the leaves words in both, poetry and prose There were very many *shlokas* and *ashlakas* which when the king read he felt great satisfaction 51 Then mounting his horse he returned with his attendants to Sātāra Here the king gave his command to the copyist who could write the best 52 He gave him the best of paper, and had him make a copy, and as he read them over again and again he found he did not grow weary of them 53 As he himself read the *abhangas* he discovered the name of Samartha, but he did not discover the region where he was born nor the name of his town 54 He understood however that the author of the verses was a worshipper of God and a vaishnava *bhakta* His writings appeared to be on the authority of the *Vedas* and *Shāstras* 55 For this reason he thought he should go as a suppliant to him, in order that he might be saved in his crossing the sea of this worldly existence "If I have good deeds laid up in a former birth, I shall succeed in meeting him 56 At the first sight of the great man, I had a suspicion He is the great man But I am unable to make out what order he belonged to 57 There are many kinds of seekers, and there are many different beliefs They worship many different divinities Some perform low forms of austerities and do not fail to go to Hell, 58 Some are Brahmans strict in their duties They perform sacrifices and make offerings By this they gain Heaven,

but when their good deeds are exhausted, they have to go to Hell 59 There are some with long matted hair Others are *Sanyāsıs* Some practise penance with their hands held up; but as these are unable to avoid lust and anger, they cannot have the rest of Final Deliverance 60 There are some who put on black clothes, but hate God They stir up controversy, but Shri Hari separates Himself from them 61 Some hold in their breath and think they can deceive Kala, but they do not understand the perishableness of the body, and they miss meeting with the Life of the-World 62 Some practise *Vajrāsana* and make the great accomplishments [*siddhis*] favorable, and pronounce a curse, and commute the same in order to get respect in the world

63 Rāmdās is not like them He is a true *bhakta* of God. Possessed with *bhakti*, knowledge and indifference to-worldly things, his love is on the *saguna* God. 64 As one reads his *abhangas*, the state of his heart becomes revealed If my good deeds are of the true kind, I will be able to worship at his feet 65 With this purpose in his mind, the king went every day to worship Ramdas He would also step into the water of the Krishna and draw out the *palasa* leaves 66 He then would take them at once to the copyist, and have him make a copy He would then sit reading the verses with fixed attention 67 Then when it was morning he would again go with the hope of meeting Rāmdas He lost his desire for kingship and for ruling So that it became a matter of concern to the Ministers

PEOPLE THINK THE KING BEWITCHED

68 People now began to gossip "The king's mind is affected. The ascetic who is performing austerities has made him crazy 69 He has abandoned horseback riding and hunting He gives no thought to the government

of the kingdom. He rises early every morning, and goes to meet him (the crazy man)"

70 The people decidedly said "The actions of the great man are wicked He has made the tigers and wolves crazy He has bewitched the big and the little monkeys" 71 So some said "He knows the *mantras* by which to bewitch He has turned men into wild beasts, and caused them to wander in the forests 72 If he is able to make wild beasts crazy, why should he not be able to make man crazy? He has turned our king s head The outlook is not good 73 The king is the only son of his mother, and the protector of many lives What has happened to his Fate we do not know 74 Thus the three kinds of people gossiped back and forth. The eight Ministers became terribly concerned, as they saw the king's actions. 75 Finally the Vedic and the Puranic Brahmans and the eight Ministers came together, and made bold to speak to the king, as follows 76 "The burden of the kingdom is upon you It is for you to carry on the duties of the *Kshatriyas* So you should not continually go to see that great man.' 77 The Pandits remarked "Hear, O king, you have become fond of his poetry But whatever interests you in it, we can show you the same in Sanskrit books 78 To cast aside the words of Vyāsa, and spend your time in reading through the verses of one composing in Marāthi seems to us an unworthy thing for you to do 79 Your kingly duty is, supposing some good man came to your palace, to make him pleased with your gift of money, but you should not go after him 80 But if you allow yourself to fall in love with him, he will make you like himself We tell this to you for your good, that you, O King, may beware, what you do" 81 The pandits' talk to him created confusion in the king's mind He would make no reply. Remaining dumb he would leave the

room 82 When an elephant walks along the king's highways, dogs bark fiercely, but that does not make him stop He walks steadily along 83 Or as the ocean roared in derision at the Muni Agasti, but he, without the least fear, sat in contemplation through self confidence 84 So the king listened to the advice of the pandits and Ministers but felt no unkind thoughts in his mind, because, he was a *bhakta* of his *sadguru*

85. (One morning) the king mounted on his horse, and alone started for the forest In his heart he had the longing for a sight of his *sadguru* 86 When he arrived at the bank of the Krishnā, he gave his command to his attendants to wander along the stream and find other inscribed leaves 87 I am going at once to meet my *svāmi* No one is to go with me In obedience to his command, his servants remained at a distance

THE KING MEETS RĀMDĀS

88 The king came before Samartha, and began looking closely at his form suddenly a most extraordinary event occurred Listen to it you pious *bhaktas* 89 He saw Maruti revealing Himself to the sight, and Ramdas worshipping Him But as he was not able to behold the dazzling light the king's eyes had to close 90 It was the third watch of the day and King Shivaji was amazed When he did open his eyes he saw no one but Ramdas. 91. Then joining his hands palm to palm, before Ramdas, he stood there tears of joy flowing from his eyes, as he gazed into the face of his *svāmi*

92 Samartha looked at him and thought He has been back and forth many times Then the kindly man called the king to come near him, for, he recognized his purity of heart 93 Seeing this, the King's heart was full of joy He prostrated himself on the ground, and continuing his prostrations he approached Ramdas with joy in his

heart 94 As he came close to Rāmdās, his throat was choked with emotion, caused by repentance He exclaimed: "I have fallen into the difficulties of this worldly existence Forgive me" 95 Seeing the condition of the king's mind, the *sadguru* felt deep sympathy for him, and giving him his hand of assurance said "Rise, O king." 96 Hearing these assuring words, the king's heart felt great joy With hands joined together, palm to palm, he stood before Rāmdās and pleaded as follows

97 'O Samartha I am in great agony from the three afflictions that trouble mankind I am drowning in the ocean of this worldly existence Draw me, Sir, out without fail O Protector-of-the-Helpless dear Guru 98 If one has performed good deeds, made pilgrimages, and without selfish thought of gain has performed sacrifices and made offerings and even may have served the saints, he may obtain the privilege of worshipping a *sadguru*'s feet 99 Such are the successive outcomes of good deeds, but I have not to my credit a single one of them On the contrary, I have committed millions of sins Forgive me. 100 Dvaipāyana was as it were, a mass of good deeds, Nārada gave him his *mantra* as his blessing and also to Vālhā (Vālmiki) that evil murderer Did he neglect him (because he was cruel)? 101 O *Sadguru* dear, O Saviour-of-the-Fallen O Thou whose feet give assurance of salvation place Thy assuring hand on my head and let me be in the shadow of Thy grace'

102 To this Samartha replied "On your shoulder is the Government of this kingdom There is unceasing enmity between worldly living and the desire for the supreme spiritual riches 103 To become the disciple of a *sadguru*, it is necessary to change your habits Your kingdom is prosperous You are fated to enjoy it" 104 Hearing this, the king made him a *namskāra* and said "All

this kingdom belongs to my *Swāmi* I am ready to obey in every way "

105 Samartha answered " Listen to my words If you associate with one 'possessed with a devil', all evil-minded people will laugh at you, and call you a veriest fool 106 In the presence of people of high rank you will naturally feel ashamed to prostrate before me Under such conditions how will you be able to accomplish your purpose of attaining the supreme spiritual riches? Give thought to this 107 If you are openly proud of connection with me, blame will fall on your head There fore, O King I will explain to you your duty Listen I will tell you. 108 There are other great men from whom you may listen to Purānic stories and *Kirtanas* and who wear clothes and ornaments Choose from among these some worthy one and go as a suppliant to him 109 Those, who associate with me, are tigers wolves and bears Deers and hares play around me I belong to the Monkey class. 110 You are the Lord of the earth You have wise pandits about you You have Brahmans learned in the *Vedas* and *shāstras* but who however throw far away the supreme spiritual riches 111 In reply to this the king bowed before him and said 'I have come as a suppliant with my body, mind and wealth. Besides that I am lowly and lacking in goodness O Merciful one cleanse me 112 The Merciful-one, recognizing the king's sincerity, felt very deeply towards him and said 'Go and take your bath and quickly return It is Thursday your good day 113 Hearing these assuring words of the *swāmi* he was made very happy He went down to the bank of the Krishna river, and bathed with his clothes on 114 As he had but one garment on he tore it into two pieces One he used to wipe himself with and the other he put on, after drying it 115 He made a paste by rubbing a flint pebble on a stone, and made the Vaishnava mark on his forehead And hav-

ing finished all the preliminary rites, he went to that part of the forest (where Rāmdās was) 116 Whatever of fruits or flowers he found, he picked to be used in the worship of his *sadguru*, and these he carried in *palasa* leaves stitched together 117. He had no vessel in which to carry water, so he made a coneshaped cup from large leaves The prince filled this with water, and returned to Rāmdās. 118 Coming near Samartha, he stood before him with palm joined to palm Rāmdās asked him to make eleven obeisances. 119 The king made the eleven obeisances, prostrating himself on the ground He determined from his heart that he would offer his body, mind, wealth, and kingdom to his *sadguru* 120 "I shall consider myself so fortunate, if only you make me a carrier of your wooden shoes" With these words the king joined palm to palm, and sat down. 121 Samartha placed his hands on his head, and whispered in his ear the *mantra* consisting of divine names The Giver of-Final-Deliverance [Rāmdās] taught him the secrets of the *mantra* seeing that he was fitted for such instruction 122 "I will instruct you in the outer practices of my order, which you must scrupulously observe 123 Give up all killing of animals, and show compassion towards all creatures If *sādhus* or saints come to your home, make yourself a suppliant before them 124 On the eleventh day of the fortnight you should worship Vishnu, and have a nightwatch service in honour of Hari And you must be regular in your daily worship of Maruti ' 125 Thus instructed by the *sadguru*, the king accepted the authority of his command He then washed his *guru's* feet with his own hands, and in love drank the water 126 He made a garland of *tulsi* leaves and flowers woven together, and put it around the neck of the *sadguru* He imagined incense and lights, and offered them before his *sadguru* 127 He had found some sweet fruit in the forest and with love he offered them to

him The Giver-of Final-Deliverance recognized the king's devout feelings, and tasted the fruit 128 The many fruits that remained uneaten, the king threw to the monkeys, and Shivaji ate with pleasure that which the *svāmi* half ate

129 Samartha now said to the king "Return now at once into the city, and perform your royal duties Come to see me some other time" 130 The king replied to the *sadguru* "I am not going to carry on my kingdom any longer, I am going to stay here in order to serve you My mind has decided upon this 131 I have already offered the glories of my kingdom to Rama. So you sit on the throne, and I, as a servant, will hold your shoes 132 If I continue to rule the kingdom, there is nothing at the end for me but Hell This is what people say I do not know whether this is true or false You, who are the personification of mercy, tell me" 133 Hearing this question of the king, the Giver of-Final-Deliverance [Ramdās] replied · It is bad for a king to remain in a forest free from desires and silent 134 Although he is free from outward hindrances, yet he can not escape the going to Hell, O king On the contrary Janaka ruled his kingdom and he became one unconscious-of body [*videhi*] 135 Rukmāngada observed the festival of the eleventh day, and took his city to heaven Because Ambarisha strictly observed the twelth day of the fortnight the Soul of the-Universe took his rebirths upon Himself 136 The famous noble king earnest in observing the teachings of the Bhagavata, reduced the city of Vaivasvata (God of Death) to ruins for ten thousand years 137 The good king Harishchandra is known through the Puran for his righteousness Dvaipayana has described in the Mahabhārata the virtuous Nala and Damayanti 138 In Dharma's luxurious home Shri Krishna zealously gathered the left-over food Krishna with his own hands washed Arjuna's horses God has great love for loving devotion [*bhakti*] 139 Through

the mouth of Shuka Parikshiti listened for a week to the reading of the Mahābhāgavata, and while listening attained Final Deliverance, though he met with an accidental death. 140 O King you have listened to these famous Paurānic stories Now then without further doubts start on the path of your personal duties 141 You have made an offering of body, mind, wealth, and kingdom to your *sadguru* Therefore no longer speak of anything as your own, and carry out my commands"

142 At these words of Samartha the king prostrated himself on the ground and his eyes filled with the tears of love 143 Again Samartha commanded him 'Rise up, O King and go Your Ministers are waiting for you Night will overtake you on your journey 144 The king arose to start but again and again looked back at Rāmdās He could not bear the thought of separation and yet he did wish to disobey Rāmdās 145 Although his heart was bound to his *Sadguru's* feet yet his material body had to walk along His feet had to move and he arrived where his company of soldiers were stationed. 146 Seeing the king, the councillors and ministers were glad. The band of sweet instruments began to play a welcome 147 King Shivaji took his seat naturally in his palanquin, but with the form of his *sadguru* in his heart he no longer loved power and wealth 148 It was four *ghatikās* of the night when he arrived at his palace The rumour was whispered from ear to ear that he had received the discipleship *mantra* from his *guru* 149 His attendants had been watching him from a distance They saw his worship, his offerings, and his obeisances and in their homes they related in detail what they had seen

KING SHIVĀJI'S DAILY VISITS TO RĀMDĀS

150 Gāga Pandit with hatred in his heart, exclaimed 'What is all this I hear? I am not at all pleased That

saint is not one highly recognized. 151 The king, without inquiring as to his caste has accepted instruction from him We see that his head is turned All this seems to me worthy of disdain ' 152 So gossiped the three classes of people among themselves But the people like owls feared to go in the king's presence 153 The king's mind however, was on the feet of his *guru* His mind was totally absorbed in that thought So as soon as the sun arose the king started again to visit Rāmdās 154 The king took with him garments and ornaments, garlands of flowers, sandal wood paste and other materials 155 All the eight ministers went with him also the merchants of the city together with many pious men to meet Rāmdas 156 They carried banners and flags The band played loud music Thus with his attendants the king arrived at the banks of the Krishnā 157 Longing to see his *sadguru* the king suddenly spied him He leaped from his palanquin 158 Keeping Samartha in view, the king walked barefooted He now saw Ramdas had his eyes closed sitting unconscious of body 159 With a motion of his hand the king had the music cease and himself stood before Ramdas with palm joined to palm 160 Wild beasts were wandering about so the king's attendants remained at a distance but the king's heart was without fear And he watched his *sadguru's* form

161 It had now reached the third watch of the day Samartha opened his eyes The king made him a *namaskāra*, and with his own hands washed Ramdas feet 162 He made the *tilaka* mark on Ramdas' forehead and smeared his person with thin paste of divine perfume He placed a garland of flowers around his neck and wound around his waist the yellow robe 163 The king in his love put on him ornaments studded with jewels He offered him the plate with incense and lights There was nothing lacking

to this form of worship 164 The king presented as an offering many kinds of cooked food prepared in ghee He placed before him the *pānasupāri* and gifts of money, and finally circumambulated him 165 According to his usual custom he made him eleven *namaskāras* After doing all this, the king stood before him 166 Samartha now said to him "*Return now to your city, you are only* increasing hindrances O king My mind does not approve your course" 167 The king replied "Until I see and worship you I will take no drink of water Without you no one can accomplish my purpose, O Samartha"

168 Thus every day the king came to worship him Rāmdas did not consider it as wearisome, because, the king's loving devotion was so unlimited 169 But Samartha thought to himself Hindrances have increased here" So, he left all his garments and ornaments there, and went into the deep forest 170 He climbed up a mountain and there sat worshipping In the meantime the king with all his materials for worship arrived at Ramdās's usual place 171 And lo ! and behold ! all his garments and ornaments were lying there, and Samartha had gone, who knows where? The king became very anxious and together with his army of attendants began to search 172 Some on horse back some on foot scattered through the forest, but the Merciful one was nowhere to be seen and the king was in great distress 173 The king was three days without food, and would drink no water He was continually exclaiming 'When shall I see again that Cloud of mercy ? When I see him, I shall feast my eyes on him' 174 The king said to himself 'Let all that I have, go, but may your name remain forever O Mother (*Sadguru*) grant me the favour of your sight' 175 The Giver of Final-Deliverance [Rāmdās] hearing the king's pleading voice, manifested Himself then and there, and the king, seeing his *sadguru's*

form, was full of astonishment 176 His heart felt supreme joy, just as when a mother embraces her infant, or as when a cow returns from grazing in the forest, and the calf rushes to suck it 177 Just so the king at once with intense love fell at his feet And Samartha made him arise, and lovingly held him to his heart 178 The king worshipped him according to the usual custom and then stood before him with palm joined to palm. Said he "Merciful-one, arrange it so that I can worship you daily" 179 Recognizing his heart's desire, Samartha replied If you will come in the very early morning, you can surely meet me 180 I am aware that you have had those verses copied, that I wrote on *palasa* leaves, and threw into the midst of the Krishna river 181 Constantly read them through with a feeling of love Know, O king, truly the reading of those verses are the equivalent of a meeting with me 182 Constantly repeat the mystic *mantra* that I whispered in your ear, and with love and reverence think of Shri Rama while worshipping Him in your heart 183 With feelings of love thrice a day go to meet with Maruti (in his temple) In doing so you will obtain a direct manifestation of Him I have thus told you my heart's secret 184 Now return to the city, O king, for you will be late ' The king made a *namaskāra* to his feet, and started for Satara.

185 Give heed This book, the Santavijaya is the holy purifying city of Pandhari on the bank of the Bhima, where the Husband of Rukmini takes pleasure in remaining 186 As He, the Lover of His *bhaktas*, and the Giver of Eternal Bliss, may cause me, Mahipati, to relate in words of blessing so I with His assuring words am reverently singing the praises of His saints 187 Svasti This book is the Santavijaya, by merely listening to it, all one s heart's longings are fulfilled May the God loving, pious *bhaktas* listen This is the fourth delightful chapter

CHAPTER V

THE GOOD LOVE THE STORIES OF THE SAINTS

1 If throughout the infinite number of rebirths there has been laid up a store of good deeds, then only there would be pleasure in listening with a reverential mind to the lives of the saints 2 Shri Rāma became an *avatāra* and Vālmiki composed a work with seven divisions regarding Him. The book is called the Ramayana 3 Dvaipāyana composed the Shri Bhāgavata, in which is related the deeds of the Krishna *avatāra* As *bhaktas* listen to those heart purifying stories, they create in them a sense of joy 4 *Bhaktas* are fond of stories about God, so the desire was aroused in Shri Hari's mind to listen to the deeds of the saints This is what Pandharinath also thinks 5 So making me His instrument, the Husband of Rukmini is the one actually relating these stories He is putting the thoughts in my mind This the wise saints recognize

RĀMDAS ACTS LIKE A MONKEY

6 In the last chapter there was related the extra ordinary story of how Samartha recognized the intense desire of King Shivāji, and giving him the needed instruction, started him on the path for attaining the supreme spiritual riches through *bhakti*

7 There are three characteristic behaviours of Supermen They are actions like those of a child like those of one possessed, and like those of one intoxicated Samartha discarded one of them but voluntarily used the remaining two. 8 *Yogis* say that those, whose behaviour is like that of intoxicated men show pride of knowledge So Rāmdās discarded that special behaviour, and adopted at first that of one possessed 9 The Giver of-Final Deliverance [Rāmdās] left the place where he had met the king and

came to Māhuli, the junction of the Krishnā and the Venyā And there began his strange antics 10 He climbed the trees by the banks of the Krishnā and there acted as one crazy The boys of the town gathered in numbers to see him, and all laughed heartily at his antics 11 He would look at the boys and wink at them He would break off branches and leaves, and throw them to the ground 12 Boys threw stones at him up in the tree, and he bore it with pleasure He would glare at them, and make faces at them 13 He would let go a branch, and appear as if he were about to fall to the ground, and then would fly backwards, and sit on a topmost branch. 14 Seeing such antics, a great crowd assembled They all remarked that he did not seem to have the least fear for his life 15 While the people were talking thus, he was wildly leaping from branch to branch He would let go his hold on some easily held branch and then again sit on a topmost bough 16 Men and women said among themselves 'In a former birth he must have been a monkey Now God has given him birth with a human body, but he cannot escape the effects of his former birth." 17 Hearing what the people were saying to one another, Samartha came down from the tree The boys pestered him severely, and threw dung at him 18 But he bore it all pleasantly, for he was supremely happy in his heart The *svāmi* laughed heartily at their acts Just then some one remarked 'He may be a superman 19 Hearing this remark, Rāmdas thought to himself Perhaps some one will want to worship me and that will work against this crazy behaviour I have adopted So he picked up a few stones, 20 and ran in a lively fashion after the boys, throwing the stones at them But the boys dodged him, and then complained to their mothers 21 One said 'Mother, he is a crazy man who has come here He runs after us with *stones in his hands We have been greatly frightened by*

him and so have come to tell you" 22 The mother replied · "Do not go far from here It is not well to have anything to do with a crazy person If you do you will yourself some day become a *yogi* or a mendicant 23 If that crazy demon possessed fellow comes into the town, do not go near him He leaps about like a monkey, and might suddenly throw stones 24 Suddenly, however, Samartha appeared in the town, and a crowd assembled to look at him They remarked "It seems to us, his life is being spent uselessly 25 In appearance he is supremely beautiful His age must be less than twenty five One does not know with what demon or ghost he is possessed" 26 While they were talking thus Rāmdās increased his curious antics He made faces at the people This made the people exclaim A mighty figure indeed!" 27 The women of the town said among themselves 'If his mother had given birth to thorn bushes they would at least have made a good strong fence 28 As Ramdas heard these remarks he was made exceedingly happy He rolled his eyes and made faces at the people 29 When many people crowded around to look at him Samartha would hold some stones in his hand to throw at them while the boys would scamper off into the side alleys Ramdas then would go back into the forest 30 and there, all alone with love in his heart, meditate on Rama Again the next day he would come into the town to beg his food 31 He would visit in turn eleven houses At no place would he remain more than a moment If anyone at once brought him something, he showed he was pleased with it 32 Out of the eleven houses, at a few only he was quickly served. And then this great *yogi* would retire to the forest 33 He had no vegetables or salt to eat He drank water and ate the cakes he baked on leaves. He did not call them either good or bad, as he had completely conquered his tongue.

34. The king's informants hunted all over the forest for Rāmdās. Searching among the valleys and mountains, at last they were fortunate in discovering him. 35 They suddenly saw Samartha baking his cakes on leaves. When the king heard the news, he was very happy 36. Alone on horseback he quickly arrived there, and according to custom he made his *namaskāras* 37 Rāmdās had made three cakes on leaves Samartha ate two of them, and set the third aside The king then began his worship. 38 The king brought costly offerings which he distributed to people Samartha gave to the king the leaf cake that had been set aside as his gift in return 39 The king took it eagerly, and there and then ate it all It was sweeter than nectar. It is the miserable, ignorant people who cannot understand this 40 People now began to say among themselves · "The king has made him his *guru*; and he (Ramdas) seems to have been haunted by a devil It does not seem a right thing" 41 Samartha now said: "O king, go back to your place" And so saying, Ramdās went off into the forest

42. The king went back to his place, and Samartha adopted another form of behaviour He came to the river junction at Mahuli, and behaved as one indifferent-to-worldly-things 43 He had at first behaved like one possessed by a demon, but now he adopted childish actions When the boys of the town gathered, he called out loudly to them: 44 "Friends, I want to play with you for a moment" And when they heard this, a great crowd assembled. 45 Just as one smiles on children, so Rāmdas did He played Hututu with the boys, but none could catch him 46. And as he played, he would repeat some blessing-bearing abhangas They would contain some spiritual meaning, but there were but few fortunate ones who could understand them

47 For example, 'In the river of Māyā there are many dangerous whirlpools. If one falls in them, it is almost impossible to come out of them 48 Sensual desires encircle him most truly, the whirl pool swings him around, involving his soul in temptations, and he ends in the eighty four rebirths' 49 Thus Rāmdās the crazy man, like Krishna in his *avatāra* form, played with the boys, but was untouched by any fault

50 The wheel of Māyā spins around at random by force of the string of ignorance and hence compels one to go from door to door 51 Then he dug the holes of right and wrong thinking and many people gathered to take part in the game of marbles 52 When it came the turn of Rāmdās he would sit on boys' backs as they walked on all fours he holding their ears and they did the same thing to him 53 Such is the game of Ignorance It makes one bend down on all fours for ever which makes the waist ache but none has the power to withstand it. 54 The Kite in the form of human body flies high up beyond the skies with the blowing of the violent wind of deeds of past and present births 55 The kite would rise so exceedingly high as to reach the heavenly regions of the blest, and then return down to the earth on account of one s adverse fortune.

BOYS ACCIDENTALLY KILL AND BURY RĀMDĀS IN THE SAND

56 He then played *viti dāndu* [bat and a piece of wood sharpened at both ends] of all games the most dangerous Rāmdās proposed the game, and all the boys stood around to play. 57 A viti [sharpened piece] flew up and struck Rāmdās on his forehead, This caused him to faint away, and fall on the ground. The boys rushed to his aid. 58 They placed their hands to his nostrils, but could not feel any breathing His body lay lifeless The boys

exclaimd O God what shall we do? 59 Some one went to the Krishnā river and dipping a cloth in the water brought it, and twisting it dropped water in his mouth but the Giver of Final Deliverance [Rāmdās] uttered not a word. 60 Another one raised him up but he seemed wholly lifeless. Some began to sob saying He is dead 61 Some began to cry out loud but knowing ones told them to cease If the affair is noised abroad we may be punished. 62 We do not know who this crazy man is nor whence he comes What connection have we with him? Why do you needlessly cry about him Think only of what might happen to you 63 If the rumour reaches the city the people will blame us They will say "Why did you murder him?" and our parents will give us a beating at home 64 It's true a very serious thing has happened and the Chief of police is not a good man and if he hears of what has happened he will make the whole city pay for this 65 So let us make an agreement that this affair shall not become known And let us quickly dig a hole in the sand and bury him in it 66 Let every one swear by his mother and father that he would not speak of this in the town. If he did the accusation of killing the crazy man will certainly fall on him 67 All this time the Merciful to-the-lowly [Ramdās] was listening to the talk of the boys

His whole thought was on Rama and all his other feelings had disappeared 68 But he said to himself Let me watch the fun And so Samartha became like one dead just as when Ceylon was burning Hanuman lay lifeless 69 So when Samartha heard what the boys were talking about he said to himself 'Let me see the fun with my own eyes And so he remained in a bodily unconscious condition

RĀMDĀS IS BURIED ALIVE

70 Though much frightened about doing it the boys dug a hole in the sand and buried the G--

Deliverance in it But some passing travellers saw what was done. 71 They said among themselves "We wonder what curious thing those boys are doing, but it is no business of ours to ask" So deciding among themselves the travellers kept on their way 72 All the boys bathed near the bank of the river Krishnā, and agreeing among themselves not to tell, they returned to their homes 73 The next day the boys returned early, and looking at the place where they had buried Ramdas they saw that it was just as they had left it. Then they continued their games, but at a distance

74 Now king Shivāji with a great desire to see his *swāmi* sent out many scouts but Samartha was no where to be seen 75 His horsemen visited twentyfive villages, but they returned without finding him They then in company with the king hunted through the mountains and forests. 76 Some of the scouts went to Māhuli, and on the way met the travellers The King's scouts asked them whether they had seen the *swāmi* 77 *Ramdas* is a crazy man but the king has made him his *guru* We have been hunting for him seven days and our feet are all wearied in hunting for him 78 Perhaps some wild animal has killed him in the jungle or perhaps he is sitting in the forest somewhere in meditation If you have seen him anywhere let us at once know 79 The travellers replied, but with fear "At the junction of Māhuli boys dug in the sand and buried a *sanyāsi* 80 There were no adults there Go and search the place After hearing what the foot travellers said the scouts left 81 They came to the steps leading down to the river and searched both banks, but they did not discover the place So finally they returned to the city 82 The Mayor of Mahuli then called all the people together and said "Your boys have killed the king's *guru* 83 While we were searching in the forest, we met some foot travellers along the path Though very

much frightened, they reported to us as follows: 84 "We saw that crazy Rāmdās playing with the boys That was seven days ago We know nothing since." 85. Having heard all this, the scouts should have done something special, but as the king had not given any command, they returned to the city

THE BOYS CONFESS THEIR DEED

86 When the people of Māhulī got together with the Patil and Deshapande [Town officials], they remarked among themselves 'It is a very serious affair for us" 87. They collected all the boys together and questioned them "You murdered the king's *Guru* Now where have you buried him?" 88 The boys, thoroughly frightened, replied. "We have not seen him" But their replies lacked coherence, so they were questioned by their parents in private 89 "No one is going to beat you We are ready to give you at once what you may ask for So now tell us truthfully what occurred Do not hesitate." 90 There were some ignorant children among them, and they told everything that had happened 'The crazy fellow was playing with us, and he was struck by the *viti* accidentally 91. He fainted away, and fell lifeless to the ground We rushed to his side, but he appeared to have no life in him 92 So then, we dug into the sand of the Krishnā, and buried his body in it" The parents exclaimed "Alas! Alas! The deed was not a good one' 93 They spoke of it among themselves, but the story spread from ear to ear The towns-people then said to the boys "Show us the place" 94 Taking the boys with them, the people arrived at the bank of the Krishna The boys pointed out the place, but then a serious question arose 95 "This is now the seventh day since he died If the king hears of this, he will destroy the whole town 96 If we dig him up to discover the truth, we shall find the body all swollen. It is not our

business to dig the body out" Thus they discussed among themselves 97 One suggested that the body should be dug out, tied together into a bundle, carried to a distance and there burned, and thus completely wipe out every trace of him 98 This advice given by the elder men was accepted by all They dug into the sand, and there they saw Samartha, and the sight was a most strange one

RĀMDĀS COMES OUT OF THE SAND ALIVE

99. As they were digging into the sand Rāmdās gave a loud cry, enough to deafen their ears, and some even fainted 100 Giving a leap, Samartha made for the forest. All the towns people were frightened out of their wits 101 Some one now remarked "It has turned out well Fate has saved us from a great disaster" Another remarked "We have seen an unexplanable thing 102. How could a person live for seven days under ground?" Some fortunate pleasure seeker sent word to the king about the affair

103 In the mean time King Shivāji, accompanied by his army of attendants, was searching for his *swāmi* He was fasting all these seven days 104 The rumour of what had occurred on the bank of the Krishna, now had spread everywhere People talked of it in their homes They exclaimed "What a wrong thing has taken place 105 Since the time the king has made this crazy man his *guru*, he himself has become crazy Through great and small forests he is continuing his search and fasting 106 If the *guru* is not conscious of himself, can he save the king?" Such was the conversation of the ignorant people among themselves 107 But the king with his limitless *bhakti* thought to himself "When shall I see my *sadguru's* face?" Spies sent from town to town now began to return, but no one spoke of finding Rāmdās 108 Suddenly, however, informants from Māhuli arrived, and they related the

news "Samartha had been playing with the boys and they had buried him in the sand 109 When travellers told us of this we rushed there, made enquiries on the bank of the Krishnā, but we saw him nowwhere."

110 When the king heard of the affair, he sobbed aloud Tears clouded his eyes, and he pleaded aloud for Rāmdas to hasten to his help 111 "Victory! Victory! to you, O Rāmdās the unchangeable, the immovable, the everlasting, the protector of the helpless, and the chief among *bhaktas* Why have you disappointed me? 112. Victory! Victory to you, who are beyond the influence of Māya Victory! Victory to a *sadguru*, who is without the three *gunas* [Satva, raja, and tama] Victory Victory! to you, Samartha! Grant me, who lack protection a meeting with you"

113 Uttering such praises of Rāmdās, the king started for Mahuli, with the same longing as the chakora bird has for the moonbeams, or that of the kid when it is looking around for the doe 114 Or as when a cow has gone into the jungle, the young calf mourns at home, or as when the chātaka bird feels intense thirst, and upward opens wide its beak, 115 Or as when a fish flops about, when out of water Such became the condition of the king He was longing to see his *sadguru* and began looking for him in every direction 116 Suddenly he saw Samartha in the Māhuli forest The king bowed prostrate on the ground before him, and held him by both his feet 117 Samartha at once raised Shivāji up, and drew him to his heart It was the embrace of love It was the joy in the hearts of God and his *bhakta*

118 The official of Māhuli had already written a letter to the king, telling of the events that had taken place there 119 So that when the king looked into the face of the *svāmi*, his love welled up in his heart

Said he "I am born again, now that you, Samartha, have again shown me your feet" 120 The king then offered to him all the materials for worship and properly worshipped him There is no joy equal to what he felt 121 There were Brahman cooks present and they had with them also materials for cooking The king had a dinner prepared, and ate in company of the *sadguru* 122 Both the *guru* and his disciple had been fasting for seven days, on the eighth they broke the fast with great pleasure 123 The king prepared the *pāna supāri* with his own hands and gave it to Samartha. Then he made him a *namaskara* in accordance with usual custom, and stood before him with hands joined, urging this plea 124 'Do this kindness to your helpless one and come with me to Satara When your feet touch that ground it will bring sacredness to my abode' 125 Samartha said in reply "I will come at some convenient time But you go back to your place for you have been wandering about for many days' 126 The king reverently accepted the command and returned to Satara A most extraordinary thing then happened Let all the hearers listen

RĀMDAS MIRACULOUSLY FEASTS BRAHMANS IN THE FOREST

127 Rāmdās the God loving *bhakta* and saint possessed with Devotion Knowledge, and Indifference to worldly things was constantly wandering about in the forests but came into the towns to beg his food 128 In his outer appearance he looked like a mad man, but in reality he was a man of infinite ability In his heart was sympathy, caused by his love God Krishna filled his heart 129 To ignorant men, who cared only for worldly things he would make no reply when spoken to And seeing him acting thus crazily, such people would run away from him 130 In some towns there were Vishnu temples

There he would make *namaskāras* to the God At nightfall he would perform enthusiastic *kirtanas*, and here he drew pious people to himself 131 If, however, sensible, pious people spoke to him, he would tell them to constantly repeat God's names, and not to forget to do so at any time

132 Now there was a certain man, by name of Jayarāma Gosavi Vadgavkar, who was a *bhakta* especially devoted to Krishna, and the Husband of Rukmini seeing his devotion, gave him a direct visible manifestation of Himself 133 He had heard a list of the good deeds of Ramdās through the mouths of saints He conceived a desire to meet him, and so came into the forest to seek him 134 Suddenly he saw him sitting by himself and worshipping Shri Rāma The moment they saw one another, both were filled with joy 135 They made *namaskāras* to one another They expressed their exceeding love in embraces It seemed as though they were the moon and the sun. 136 Or as if they were Vishnu and Shiva in reality, who had come to meet one another Or as it were, the accidental meeting of Shri Rama and Krishna in which their essential oneness came together 137 So Jayarāma and Ramdas in a loving meeting for both, conversed on those interesting themes of soul personal experiences and the essence of *bhakti* 138. Ramdas went as usual into the city, and begged his food at eleven houses and on returning to the forest would with his own hands, make cakes baked on leaves 139 Food obtained from begging is sacred food and both of them partook of it Neither of them called it good or bad They had learned to control their sense of taste and mind 140 Both enjoyed the good association of the other, and through the joy of that association they lived without fear Aside from the wild animals, they had no association with anyone 141 Some days passed in talking of personal experiences of soul,

and the joy arising from *bhakti* Then on one occasion Rāmdas said to Jayarāma

142 "Let us give a feast in this forest to a thousand Brahmans" Jayarama agreed, but added "You will have to go and bring the Brahmans' 143 Samartha went into the town, and saw sitting there a great crowd of Brahmans He bowed to all of them, and invited them to come to a feast of a thousand 144 The Brahmans asked "Who is going to act as the host on the occasion of the feast of a thousand?' Samartha replied 'Jayarāma Gosavi" 145 The Brahmans hearing this laughed "Both are alike one another precious crystals They met one another in the forest 146 Just as Narada and Tumbara did, always repeating the name of God, and with nothing on but clouts You both are just like them 147 For a feast all kinds of materials are necessary A feast is not a Hari kirtana, where you can use stones for cymbals and dance without shame' 148 But Samartha continued to invite them. "All preparations have been made Come along at once," and with this he held their feet 149 The Brahmans replied 'You crazy fellow you are acting towards us with your monkey tricks It is useless to associate with you. The poor fellow who does will become a beggar 150 King Shivaji was in every way a good man You gave him instruction You have made him a wanderer through the forest That is what you have planned for us 151 You are planning to take us into the forest on the pretext of a feast to a thousand The wild beasts there will devour the Brahmans We can already see what is going to happen.' 152 To this Samartha replied You need have no fear of the wild beasts Rama has placed all of them under control Have no doubts of this in your minds" 153 One of the Brahmans replied 'Let us go as far as the forest and see what there is there If the feast has been prepared, then we

can take back with us the big crowd' 154 Samartha answered "If my statement is not true, then I am not the servant of Rama' This statement was accepted by all 155 All the Brahmans of the city, trusting to Rāmdās' word, took with them their dining clothes, their vessels, and plates, and started for the forest 156 They said among themselves 'We have accepted this liar's invitation We shall not regard it as true until we partake of his feast" 157. While they were thus talking among themselves, Rāmdās proceeded forward He announced to Jayarama that the Earth gods (Brahmans) were about to arrive at the āshrama [place of his abode] 158 "We must now plan to pay them respect and reverence, with worship, feasting and gifts, so that the noble twice-born will be satisfied" 159 At Rāmdās' command Jayarama invoked the eight Siddhis (accomplishments personified) The ashrama with many forms of decorations was adorned 160 The trees formed a pavilion It was decorated with most beautiful flowers and fruits He arranged raised seats on all sides. To look at the scene brought a sense of peace to one's heart 161 Having smoothed and cleaned the floor, he made designs on it with coloured powders according to the usual usage, but all with varying drawings The sitting boards were also placed around 162 In the meantime all the Brahmans now arrived, and as they beheld the ashrama, they were exceedingly pleased They noticed Jayarāma sitting alone by himself in a thicket. 163 The Brahmans seeing this became anxious They said 'We see no smoke in the ashrama We listened to the invitation of that crazy fellow, and we have arrived here in this forest far from home" 164 Ramdās said to them: "O Earth gods, go now and take your baths The feast is now ready, why let it grow cold needlessly?" 165 The Brahmans returned from their baths, and immediately took their seats in arranged lines. Samartha began with

their worship with expressions of love 166 Finally, he washed their feet, marked them with divinely perfumed pastes, and with the kasturi paste on their foreheads, he placed garlands of flowers around their necks 167. Incense, lights, and the platter with lights were waved about the Brahmans, and Jayarāma placed before each one a plate with daintily cooked food 168 There were delicious dishes, vegetables of various kinds, and also in addition ghee and sugar And at the end of the rite of offering he (Jayarāma) said "Shri Hari is the enjoyer of the feast". 169 Whatever dish any one liked, there was no lack of it on anyone's plate And after all were satisfied, there took place the washing of their hands 170 In receiving the *pānasupāri* and gifts the Brahmans were made very happy. They exclaimed 'You have given us a most delightful feast Blessed is the greatness of the saint" 171 The fame of that good deed now spread far and wide Even the scorners, the crooked minded and the evil doers, on hearing of the miracle began making *namaskaras* to Ramdās

JAYARĀMA LEAVES, AND A BARBER BECOMES A DISCIPLE

172 The Servant-of Krishna [Jayarāma] now asked Samartha leave to return to his own home "But I have a great desire to see you again," he said 173 Rāmdās replied "if there is mutual love in hearts, then though there may be separation of body, one should not speak of distance between the two" 174. Thus speaking to one another and making *namaskāras* to one another, Jayarāma Gosāvi Vadgāvkar started at once to return. 175 Samartha then sought for a lonely forest when he gave himself wholly to the thinking of Rāma, and pleaded with Him in pitiful words

176 The king's scouts returned to Sātārā, carrying the tidings that they had found Rāmdās. The king came

bringing with him the materials for worship, and met with Ramdas 177 The king made him a prostrate obeisance, and worshipped him with all the materials he had brought He worshipped his *guru* just as *bhaktas* worship God 178 The king joins his hands, palm to palm, and spoke words of praise He reminded Ramdas that he had promised to come to Satara 179 Samartha replied 'Return now I will come some time' The king made him a *namaskāra* and at once left

180 As Rāmdas was wandering about the Mahuli forest, he suddenly met a barbar He made a *namaskāra* to Samartha and said "Let me shave you 181 I have a desire in my heart to serve a saint' Samartha replied "You may," and the barber shaved his head 182 Then joining palm to palm, and standing before Ramdas, but at a distance, he exclaimed "A desire has arisen in my heart to be with you always 183 I have no wife or child God has destroyed every snare Now I have the wish to be day and night in the company of the good ' 184 Samartha recognized his sincerity, and said ' You may If you should ask for instruction at once, I am not able to give it 185 It is first necessary to serve with sincerity of purpose, and then to ask your *guru* for insturction The barber replied "I have no other desire 186 I will in every way serve you, and remain with you day and night I shall want no instruction aside from this ' And with this he fell at his feet 187 Samartha laughed heartily and asked him his name He replied "This your slave is called Datta and I am not going to leave these (your) feet'

188 In the next chapter will appear the peacefulness of Samartha I shall speak of it as best I can, and the saints must give me their attention 189 The Husband of Rukmini, who lives on the bank of the Bhima, a lover

of his *bhaktas*, and a bestower of mercy. He has given me, Mahipati, His assuring blessing, and is causing me to relate the deeds of the saints.

190. *Swasti*. This book is the Santavijaya, the mere listening to which fulfils the longings of the heart. May the God-loving pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the fifth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

MAHIPATI ASKS GOD'S BLESSING ON HIS BOOK

1. Victory to Thee, Voluntary-assumer-of-a-human-body, Infinite one, Recliner-on-the-serpent-Sesha (Anant), Husband-of-Lakshmi, Merciful-to-the-lowly, Lord of-Pandhari Thou art the protector of the helpless in their distresses 2. In Thy various *avatāras* Thou hast protected Thy *bhaktas* Dvaipāyana has very fully described their voluntary deeds 3 In the Sanskrit language, and in many forms, he composed the eighteen *Purānas* Still the description of the lives of the saints is still far from complete Even Vyāsa's mind was unable to cope with them all. 4 O God-Supreme, in describing Thy attributes serpent Shesha failed through weariness Even Brahmadeva was overwhelmed with wonder Then what chance can a mere man have? 5 Yet I, Mahipati, dull of mind, of a little intellect in every respect, have become a vessel containing the gift of Thy assurance This is also what my own people say. 6. So now being proud of that fact, O Shri Hari, give my mind the power of remembrance, so that I may properly relate in Marāthi the stories of Thy saints 7 O God Supreme, do this for me. I have no other desire in my heart By Thy favour carry to completion this book, the Santavijaya

THE FORGIVING SPIRIT OF RĀMDĀS

8 In the last chapter there was related the extraordinary event of Rāmdās having been buried in the sand, of the feast to a thousand Brahmans in the forest, and how the barber began to serve Ramdās

9. After those events, Samartha continued his wanderings through the forests, indifferent to all worldly things

All the Siddhis [Divinities of Accomplishments personified] became his slaves, but he paid no attention to them 10. If he heard any one speak of the joys of heaven, he regarded them as dog's dung He was without desires, a Muni without passions, and reverential in his worship of Rāma.

11 He initiated Dattu [the barber] as a disciple, and then said to him "Go into the town now and beg for food." He himself sat down in the forest, meditating on Rāma 12 Dattu visited eleven houses, and brought back some flour Samartha made it into cakes baked on leaves, and both partook of them.

13 In the mean time the king was continually thinking "When will the *Swāmi* favour me with a visit"? Samartha was aware of his loving devotion and said to Dattu 14 "It is now my duty to go to Satara The king has a great desire that I should come" He gave to Dattu his bag, and walked ahead 15 As he walked along, he sang verses, composed in various meters, verses in praise of Shri Rāma It is not possible to describe in words the supreme joy of that occasion

16 While walking in this manner, a very remarkable event took place along the path. Samartha was delighted to see some water, and descended to it for a bath' 17 remarking to Dattu that Satāra was now only two miles away, and he thought it well to perform here his devotions and bath. 18 Dattu replied to Samartha "The field here is very ripe The pods have turned a greenish gold I will at once roast them over a fire 19 You can eat a few mouthfuls, and I am overcome with hunger myself" The *Swāmi* replied 'The food obtained from begging is the food that is most fitting for us. 20 To take ears of corn without asking the owner is bringing down great blame on one's head The city is now very near.

Why do you needlessly make such an effort?" 21 After saying this to Dattu, he at once went down and bathed. Then with his thoughts on Rāma he sat meditating 22. Dattu disobeyed him He immediately collected dry dung cakes He piled them, and set them afire He broke off ears of corn and began roasting them. 23. The owner of the field of grain was at a distance, but he saw the smoke And the wind was blowing towards him, he also smelt it He came running 24 While still far off he yelled and cursed and swore Full of anger the Shudra [Low caste] came near where Ramdas was. 25 There he saw Dattu roasting the ears of corn. He gave him a severe beating The Shudra then came to Ramdas, and with his sling began striking him on his back. 26. Ramdas paid no attention to the pain, and laughed heartily to himself The Shudra demanded 'What an improper thing you have done 27 I have not as yet offered a portion of the crop to the water deities and Mhasoba And if it is eaten before the offering, my prosperity is sure to suffer 28 You have worn the garb of a superman, such as a clout, a waist cord and a garland of tulsi beads, and when struck with a sling you laughed, therefore, you must really be called a crazyman 29 Having done and said all this, the owner of the field went back to his watching seat At this Dattu felt very sad in his heart 30 Dattu came close to Ramdas, and looked at the welts on his back. Said he 'If I had not done what was wrong this misfortune would not have happened.' 31 With this confession the tears from his eyes flowed freely Samartha said to Dattu: "Why do you feel badly? 32 When you are dishonored do not be troubled. When you are insulted do not get angry When you are despised, do not sulk. He only is a man of God who acts thus. 33 People try to make you ashamed, because of your poverty, but do not let your mind be troubled at that If they should slap

you on your face, you should not feel badly. One only who has this spirit, is to be called a saint 34 If a thief steals your goods, and you make no effort to recover them, the evil minded may laugh at you, but it means added love in the worship of Shri Rāma It is a person of such a spirit that is to be called a saint 35 You were very happy at the thought of eating the tender roasted corn. But when you were beaten, you felt pain That is not a good form in which to possess Indifference-to-worldly-things 36. A man is always doing good and bad things. Joy and pain are their results But those who are wise, do not make a fuss over them" 37. Dattu replied "O Samartha, if I had not done wrong, that man would not have beaten you with the sling My heart sorrows on that account 38 I have remained with you to serve you, but I have given you, O *sadguru*, pain instead There is no other transgression equal to this Now what will my life hereafter be!" 39 With this confession his tears flowed freely from his eyes, Samartha sought to comfort him Said he "Such things cannot be avoided by those who come as *avatāras* 40 Now I am going to tell you one thing Listen And my command is your authority for doing what I tell you Do not by any means tell the king what has happened here 41 If any one presses you to tell, then be silent by adopting dumbness The king will have the Shudra beaten, and that will be a loss to our good reputation 42 You must swear by me that you will tell no one In reply to these words of Samartha, Dattu held his feet

43. In the meanwhile, at the command of the king, some of his scouts arrived there As soon as they saw Samartha, they prostrated before him from a respectful distance 44 Returning, they reported to the king that they had wandered here and there in the jungles to find Samartha, but found him sitting close by When

the king heard this, he was glad 45 The king at once gave orders to his minister to have all the army in readiness He himself went ahead barefooted Blessed was the sincerity of his devotion 46 Elephants, horses, chariots and on the elephants gilt embroidered cloths and banners Beaten drums made loud music The eight Ministers went with the army 47 There were many flags with the seven colors Dancers sang songs The Haridāsa shouted aloud the names of Hari Their enthusiasm was great 48 The eight Ministers walked on foot The inhabitants of the city flocked behind them As soon as the king saw the face of the *Sadguru*, he with love in his heart made a *namaskāra* 49 Then the soldiers of the army and the Ministers made him a prostrate *namaskāra*. They garlanded him with flowers, and scattered fragrant powders all about 50 At the king's request Rāmdās seated himself in a palanquin The sound of the musical instruments filled the air, and drums were loudly beaten. 51 The king laid one hand on the planquin, and with the other he waved over him a fly-wisp As they entered in to the city cannons were fired 52 Citizens stood in the upper stories and on roofs to watch the scene Flowers and perfumed powders were thrown into the air even at a distance from him Blessed is that holy ground 53 The procession thus moving along the *svāmi* entered the king's palace At the king s request Ramdās was seated on the royal throne

54 In another part of the palace a feast was being prepared with delicious dainties of many kinds The Brahmans returned from their baths, and were seated in long lines 55 The king with all the materials for worship began the loving worship of his *sadguru* There were among the guests Vedic Brahmans, and they repeated the Vedic *mantras* 56 Instruments made sweet music The sound was even too great for the air to contain it The

swāmi was quickly seated and the king washed his feet 57 He wiped them with clean cloths and touched his own eyes with his (Rāmdās) great toe He lovingly drank the water with which Rāmdās feet had been washed and felt great joy in so doing 58 The king with his own hands rubbed him with perfumed oil mixed with *arqaja* to which was added the perfumes of *Keshara* (saffron) and musk

59 At that moment the king discovered welts on Rāmdās' back. He was amazed but kept the matter to himself 60 After he had been rubbed with oil much hot water was brought and the king bathed him with his own hands 61 He wiped him thoroughly with cloths and placed sandals before him Finally he dressed him in a gay robe of divine yellow 62 As the *swāmi* took his seat, the Brahmans repeated the *mantras* The king worshipped him with very great love 63 On his brow were made the three upright marks and his person was smeared with a thin paste of sandal wood. A garland was placed around his neck To look at him gave the eyes a feeling of peace 64 The king with loving gestures adorned him with ornaments studded with jewels Fragrant powders were sprinkled on his forehead and incense lights and camphor were lighted before him 65 Ripe dates bananas prepared in ghee pomgranates custard apples fresh cocoanuts and the Rāmphala were all offered to him. 66 Then with songs of praise the lights were waved about the *sadguru* he was circumambulated and lovingly bowed to In doing so the king was very happy 67 In the same way the king s secretaries worshipped the Brahmans Their plates were plac d before them in line and the vegetables and the other cooked food were served. 68 As the *ghee* was being served Samartha performed the rite of offering The enjoyer of this food is Rāma and the Brahmans repeated this *mantra* 69 Sometimes some one feasts his *sadguru*, and performs the rite of offering himself But that is be-

cause of ignorance, he not knowing the proper custom 70 When all one's body, soul, and possessions have been offered to one's *sadguru*, then they all belong to the *sadguru* The king understood the significance of this. 71 So when the *svāmi* performed the rite, the Brahmans offered food to the five vital airs before they commenced to dine, and then they partook of whatever pleased their taste, until all were satisfied. 72 Thus in joy the feast took place, and the *pānasupāri* and gifts were distributed to each one The king then took up the plate on which Samartha's leavings remained and ate them

73 Retiring to a private room, the king called in Dattu, the barber He asked him in this privacy to tell him what had happened on the way 74 Said he "What is the cause of that welt on Samartha's back? Dattu remembered what his *svami* had told him, and answered not a word 75 But finally he did say that Ramdās had made him swear that he would not tell The king replied 'If you do not tell me I shall never touch food 76 Seeing the strong determination of the king, Dattu was in great perplexity Said he 'I am, as it were between two fires What shall I decide to do?' 77 The king replied 'Tell me at once or I shall commit suicide' Seeing the determination of the king, he told him all from the beginning to the end 78 As the king listened he was greatly disturbed in his mind However, he partook of the bliss giving food on his *guru's* plate and was happy over it 79 After the act of cleansing his mouth the king had a letter written ordering all the people of the field owner s town together with the *Patil* [Mayor] to come to Satara 80 The householders of the city, the officials, the Ministers, the army officers and all the men and women who had been left out, together with Shudras, then sat down to eat 81 The feast was thus finished and the sun was now setting The Ministers then made preparation for a *kirtana*

with Dattu The king searched for him in the city Not finding him, the king reasoned. 128 "Samartha, having fulfilled my wish, must now have gone back to his forest abode" He, therefore, sent his scouts into the forest to search for Rāmdās, and report to him where he was 129. Just then some one told him that Samartha was in a certain forest The king then took with him the materials for worship, and went to meet with Rāmdās 130 The king made him a prostrate *namaskāra*, and worshipped him in accordance with his usual custom

Samartha said to the king "I must go to Trimbak for the *Sinhastha* festival" 131 The king replied 'Take me along with you' Samartha answered "Remain in your city and carry on your royal duties 132 If you should come with me, it would become a cause of dissatisfaction. The Muhammadan rule is very severe But you may come later on a pilgrimage" 133 The king responded "Your command is my authority' Then with his hands, palm to palm he made a request of Samartha. "The Pandits, Vedics, Purānics, and Brahmans are constantly asking me 134 'Of what line of ancestry and caste is this Samartha. We are without information regarding him This is what they are all the time asking me So please, O Statue-of-Mercy, tell me." 135 At this request of the king, Samartha laughed and said "I belong to the Monkey caste. Up to now the Brahmans do not seem to recognize it 136 But the Lord-of Ayoddhyā, the Husband-of Sitā [Rāma] lived in company with Monkey He has no caste and is quite separate from the four castes

(*Abhanga* not translated)

137 Hearing this reply of Samartha's, the king was for a time lost in thought, then joining his hands together, and standing before him, made the following request 139 "As you are going to the

Sinhastha festival on the bank of the Godāvari, you should carry with you some money At that sacred city it is nessary to give gifts and perform acts of charity, and you should have in your possession money for necessary expenses 139 Having heard of your fame, the Brahmans will come rushing to you" The *Svāmi* replied "But no one will recognize me there at all ' 140 The king responded, "Can the sun hide itself in the darkness? All this kingdom belongs to the *Svāmi* Why should you hesitate to carry money with you? 141 When the *Svāmi* performs his *kirtanas*, many will come to listen, and I know of nothing to which I could compare the incomparable blessed influence of your *kirtanas* 142 And when you perform a *kirtan* in Panchavati, near the Temple of Rāma, a great crowd will gather and fall at your lotus feet 143 The Brahmans there will then say "This is Samartha, the *guru* of the king But he gives no gifts or charities Why has he come thus empty handed? 144 The treasury is here, and all its contents belong to you, Samartha Why do you hesitate to carry money with you? 145 Seeing the king's wish, Samartha replied 'Whatever is your pleasure, do it at once" 146 Hearing these assuring words, king Shivaji was made very happy At the king's command the Ministers arrived bringing the materials for worship 147 Then the king through the lips of the Brahmans worshipped the *sadguru* according to the prescribed custom just as Dharma worshipped Krishna at the close of the sacrifice made by the Monarch of the universe 148 He was clothed with a gold embroiderd yellow robe, adorned with ornaments, set with jewels His crown was set with diamonds, so dazzlingly brilliant that after looking at them people had to close their eyes 149 The king with his feeling of love clothed Ramdās with his own hands *And with garlands, bouquet of flowers and anointing* with sandal oil, he continued the worship of Samartha 150

The king placed offerings before him, incense, lights and the platter of light, and bowed prostrate before him as custom prescribed 151 He gave two hundred horsemen to go with Samartha, and an efficient secretary, an officer who had proved himself dilligent in service 152 He had two palanquins made ready, a carriage and two elephants On one was fastened a canopied tower and on the other a flag with the emblem of Māruti 153 The king gave him for his expenses four hundred thousand in coined silver rupees He seated Samartha in the royal carriage, and lovingly walked beside him to see him off. 154 The king walked at his side for twentyfour miles. Samartha then said to him in his kindly manner "Return now to your city' 155 The king, choked with emotion, replied 'I cannot bear the thought of separation. Now do what will soon bring about a meeting with you again" 156 Samartha responded "Always keep me in your remembrance I shall always be in your heart We are no longer two persons' 157 The king replied "That is a true statement but the heart wants a visible form in order to feel its comfort Grant this, O Merciful-One' 158 While uttering these words, tears of love filled his eyes His throat choked with emotion the king stood sobbing 159 He placed his head on Rāmdās' feet, as the latter hastened to start on his way The king stood still as long as Rāmdās could be seen in the distance 160 The king then made a prostrate *namaskāra* towards his *guru*, and returned to Sātārā.

Now listen with reverence to what happened, you pious people 161 As Samartha journeyed along the people of the towns came out to see him Sarmartha, however, accompanied by his disciples went regularly into the towns to beg his food 162 He had provisions with him given by the king, and he used it for feeding the Brahmans, but he himself ate only the sacred

food obtained by begging 163 In whatever town he lodged for the night, he performed a *kirtana* All the people came to listen, that their hearts might be filled with love to God 164 A great crowd of pilgrims went along with Samartha. He looked carefully after their needs Saints have tender hearts 165 Also Brahmans of very high rank joined the pilgrims out of love for him The king's secretary saw to all their wants 166 In this way the procession of pilgrims approached near Trimbakeshvar Suddenly there appeared the Brahmans of the sacred city, who had come forward to welcome them 167 They reverently approached Samartha and asked "From what town are you ? What are the names of your father and mother? What is your family name? Tell us' 168 Samartha replied "My father is Rāma My good mother is Jānaki I am called Rāmdās' 169 The Brahmans looked over the list of names in their memoranda books, but they were unable to find the names of his forebears Ramdas, however, said "The first Brahman to meet me, I accept as my officiating priest" 170 He then went down to Kushavarta, and bathed with his clothes on Immediately after this, he gave his garments and adornments to his officiating priest 171 The Brahman priest then said to Ramdas "You should now be shaved. Samartha replied "One should not be shaved while his parents are alive".

(*Abhangas* not translated)

172 He then with his own hands distributed more than a hundred thousand rupees to the Brahmans, and made mendicants and beggars happy (by his gifts) 173. Then taking his begging bag Samartha went into the sacred city, accompanied by his disciple After crying "Victory to Rāma', he hurried away, but taking whatever was given him

174 In the meantime the Secretary had given orders for cooking All the Brahmans of the city came to the banquet 175 The Brahmans were worshipped with all usual ceremonies and cows were given them Then various kinds of daintily cooked food were served on the plates, and every one was feasted 176 But Samartha along with his disciple ate only the food they had obtained by begging The town's people expressed great surprise at this, which seemed a course of action impossible for anyone 177 They said "With all that amount of money in his possession, yet he goes begging from house to house. That is a crazy performance of his, and how is it he does it?"

178 When Rāmdās performed the *kirtanas* at night, all the Brahmans were intensely interested, and the hearts of women Shudras and of other people were deeply touched 179 In this manner *kirtanas* were regularly performed, full of loving enthusiasm Sādhus and saints those desiring salvation those indifferent to worldly things, and lovers of God came to listen.

(*abhangas* not translated)

RĀMDĀS RAISES A DEAD BIRD TO LIFE

180 Some days thus passed, and then a special event took place One day Rāmdās went out for recreation 181 He took a *galul* (pebble firing bow) in his hand, and had his disciple set up a mark He made a pile of sand, and on it fixed a banyan tree leaf as his mark. 182 When Samartha shot a pebble at the leaf on the sandy pile, he at the first trial made a hole in it, and all the people cried "Well done! well done! He never misses the mark" 183 Then they set up another leaf as a target Just then a turtle dove alighted behind the leaf target. Without intending to do so, Samartha hit the bird and killed it. 184. At this Samartha laughed aloud "I have hit my mark well', he exclaimed The Brahmans, on the contrary, heartily

condemned Rāmdas. 185 They said "What sort of a superman is this? He has come to this sacred place, and here takes a life He seems to have no regard for a life His heart feels no pity" 186 Samartha said to the Secretary "Bring the bird to me" As he took the bird in his hand, and looked at it, his heart felt pity. 187 He covered it with a handkerchief, and then said to the Brahmans "You dwellers of this sacred city, are omniscient Therefore, bring this bird to life at once 188 You abound in good deeds You regularly perform austerities Now spend a little of your good deeds and preserve the life of this bird. 189 By so doing, you will be praised for a good deed, and I shall be freed from blame And I will at once give you whatever amount of money you may ask. 190 The Brahmans replied If one should spend ten million rupees, its life could not be brought back You however, sing with enthusiasm the praises of God 191 Under whose feet the slab of stone became Ahilya a human being Rāma caused Lanka (Ceylon) to be captured by monkeys 192 Rāma made Hanumanta and Bibhishana to live for ever So, Samartha, think of your Rāma and raise this bird to life' 193 To this challenge of the Brahmans Samartha said in reply 'Is Rāma not able to do this simple thing? This Ramdas did as follows 194. He took the dead bird in his hand, and fed it with water from the Godavari Immediately it flew off into the air, while all the assembled Brahmans looked on 195 The bird flew up into the air and Samartha flew after it quickly caught it, and seated it on his shoulder 196 He then said to the Brahmans 'You prescribe various penances You make people again and again shave their head but you possess no direct manifestation of God 197 But now by my merely repeating the name of Rāma, the bird s life returned How can there be a more powerful method? I truly see none' 198 The Brahmans after listening to Samartha, exclaimed

"He is a true *bhakta* of Rāma, an *avatāra* of Māruti". 199. Thus praising Samartha they all bowed down to him, and exclaimed "This noble Vaishnava has arisen to save the world."

RĀMDĀS WORSHIPS TRIMBAKESHVARA

200 Samartha now went to pay his respects to Trimbakeshvar, the form of whose image Ramdās has described in verse Let saints listen to it with reverence

(Verses not translated)

201 Rāmdās remained here for one month. By day there were feasting for Brahmans, and at night *kīrtanas* in honor of Hari In listening to them hearts were deeply moved

202. One day, without telling any one, Rāmdās slipped quietly away He went barefoot and unclad. He arrived at Panchavati 203 The Secretary followed after him with his elephants, horsemen and palanquins He made Samartha *namskāra*, and said to him "Why did you leave without telling any one?' 204 Rāmdās replied to him "The one whose leave I should take is Rāma, who dwells in the heart. I have come to Panchavati to meet with Him." 205. Thus speaking, Samartha went on to pay his respects to Rāma. At the great door of the temple he prostrated himself with loving thoughts 206 God and his *bhakta* met here together. They looked at one another face to face Rāmdas embraced His feet. Their joy was greater that their hearts could contain. 207. Rāmdās then composed a description of the image of Rāma, which I take pleasure in quoting Listen, pious people.

(*Abhangas* not translated)

208 After Rāmdās had thus described the image of Rāma, he worshipped Him with the usual ceremonies, and

offered Him garments and ornaments 209 Flowers and repeating of *mantras*, and the sound of many musical instruments were included in the worship After making Him a *namaskāra*, Rāmdās worshipped Māruti 210 Māruti then appeared in visible form and spoke words of assurance to Rāmdas "Whenever you think of me, consider me as present with you." 211 As this *bhakta* of Rāma thus spoke the heart of Ramdās filled with joy He gave gifts to Brahmans 212 He satisfied the appetites of the citizens of the sacred city with various kinds of deliciously cooked food And in giving them *pānasupari*, and other favors, he pleased the Dweller in Ayodhya [Rama] 213 Rāmdas spent in the sacred city all the money the King had given him, and whatever else he possessed he put it to benevolent uses

214 In the next chapter will be told how Ramdas performed delightful *kirtanas* in the presence of Rāma Hearers must listen attentively 215 The Merciful to the lowly, the Lord of Ayodhya is hereby singing the praises of his servants Mahipati is merely used as an instrument The wise understand this

216 *Svasti* This book the Santavijaya makes the hearer indifferent to worldly things by merely listening to it Listen then to it, you God loving pious *bhaktas* This is the sixth delightful chapter

---

CHAPTER VII

GOD AND HIS BHAKTAS ARE ONE

1 Just as the moon and its coolness, just as nectar and its sweetness so God and his *bhaktas* are two persons in one 2 Or as a sacred bathing pool and its water, or as a pearl and its lustre are essentially one, so God and his *bhakta* are essentially one They are in no respect different 3 Or as the sky and its expanse are one or as there can be no juices without water so Ramdas and Rama were different in no respect from one another 4 Or as the sun and the dawn are known by two names but are not seen as two in the vault of the sky, being of but one essence. 5 So God and His *bhakta* are always one in essence and out of love become *avataras* in this world of mortals in order to save the world

RĀMDĀS PERFORMS KIRTANAS AT PANCHAVATI

6. In the last delightful chapter it was stated that Rāmdas went to Trimbaka and remained there a month He then went to Panchavati 7 He there looked upon Rāma s image, and worshipped Him with the sincerity of a loving heart He sang the praises of this object for contemplation and satisfied the Brahmans with food.

8 When the sun had set he began the performance of his *kirtana*. When the Panditas, Vedicas and other distinguished people heard of this they came to listen 9 A dense crowd of women, Shudras, both men and women, Gujaratis and pious pilgrims gathered at the great door of the temple All were most anxious to hear him 10 The sound of the musical instruments swelled to a great volume by cymbals *vinās* and loud sounding drums Rāmdās then began the *kirtana* with keen delight 11 He

sang *abhangas* with his gracious voice. I quote them. Listen to them. For his deeds were like his words. And therefore his good fame had spread among men.

(*Abhangas* not translated)

12. Hearing Rāmdās' words of praise, Rāma was pleased, and giving him a direct manifestation of Himself in visible form, met with him. 13. The people did not see Him, and so He talked with Rāmdās, in private, of confidential things. He said: "You and I will constantly meet one another. Do not think of me and yourself as two persons. 14. Māruti is truly my very life. Only for the sake of service is there the appearance of duality. You are his *avatāra* in this *kaliyuga*, for the salvation of the world. 15. If ever you are in distress, bring my form to your mind. And as soon as that hindrance has been put away from you, make known to men my praise." 16. Thus did the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma] with a loving thought give Rāmdās the assusance that he need not fear, and then vanished out of sight. Rāmdās now came back to consciousness. 17. Although it was but for a moment that Rāmdās was in this condition of bodily unconsciousness, yet he saw much of wonderful things. After coming to consciousness, he continued the worship of Rāma. 18. He made the wise and pious listeners repeat God's names. In a loud utterance they worshipped, so that all space was overflowed with it. 19. He fastened little bells to his ankles and danced as he sang. There was clapping of hands and snapping of fingers. Hearers in their interest lost their bodily consciousness.

RĀMDĀS PREACHES THE POWER OF GOD'S NAME

20. Rāmdās preached to his hearers thus: "I am going to tell you the supreme way by which God is to be attained. It is through the purifying name of Shri Hari

[God] 21 One should repeat His name all the time. Even the washing of the face and bathing is not necessary, for, in Him, whose name is used, all holy waters consist. 22 In the repeating of God's names there is the equivalent of all outer forms of religious acts and austerities One who repeats God's names is unharmed by hindrances, for the Life of the-world drives them away

23 The Lord-of Kailasa [Shiva] drank the poison, and as a consequence his whole body was on fire He made the Ganges river flow on to his head, but that did not cool him off. 24 He then placed the moon on his head, and enveloped himself in an elephant's skin He tried many other remedies but was not helped by any of them 25 Then repenting he exclaimed "All these things are in vain But finally he repeated Rāma's name, and became cooled

26 Kuntanī was simply a mass of every form of sins She called to her parrot, whose name was Rāghobā [Rāma], and immediately God sent a chariot of light for her, and took her to Vishnu's Heaven. 27 Ajāmila was a Brahman, but he misbehaved with a low caste woman! Yet in calling his son he remembered Narayana and he was immediately saved 28 Benares, the City of Salvation, was where Vishveshvara preached the power of God's name By it souls are saved. There is no question about this 29 The great Yogi Shuka, who had attained final deliverance, read the Bhagavata repeatedly, and in singing *the goodness of Shrī Hari from a loving heart* he became one full of joy 30 He who loves the taste of *kirtanas*, loses the repetition of births and deaths and God is always near him day and night 31 Therefore with sincerity in one's heart one should sing the praises of God's deeds and the Lord-of-heaven being pleased thereby will help such an one in his devotion to Him"

32 Such were Rāmdās' *kirtanas*, and his hearers were absorbed in interest. Tears flowed from their eyes Sobs of love were heard 33 Rāmdās then repeated the final verses of praise, and waved lights over the Husband-of-Sita [Rāma] After shouts of "Victory, Victory," sweetmeats were distributed

RĀMDĀS REVISITS TĀKALĪ

34 Samartha then went into the temple and asked the God's permission to depart "Husband of Sita let Thy love continue, and again in the future give me the privilege of seeing Thee 35 Thou hast a great multitude of *bhaktas*, but I have no God but Thee Rama, in order to attain Thee I have abandoned all who are dear to me 36 Shri Rama, Thy visible form is my chief treasure I know no other means of salvation but Thy name Thy heart naturally discerns' 37 While saying these things tears of love filled his eyes Shri Rāma then drew Ramdas close to His heart, and in loving words gave him comforting words 38 Rāmdās then circumambulated Him, and bowed prostrate on the ground before Him Then circumambulating and keeping the temple to the right, he departed

39 At the request of the Secretary, Ramdas was seated in the palanquin with expressions of love On each side a man waved a fly whisk and many kinds of musical instruments were played 40 Two elephants led the procession On the cloths covering them there was embroidered the emblem of Maruti The Haridās shouted aloud God s names saying Rāma is all powerful

41 Thus accompanied with a large multitude Samartha arrived at Tākali. Here Uddhava Gosavī hastened to meet him 42 Along with him came the men of the town and all of them bowed prostrate on the ground before Ramdas The multitude in the procession pitched their tents near

the temple of Māruti and there encamped 43 Samartha gave orders to the Secretary to prepare at once a feast and to invite all the Brahmans in the neighboring towns to the banquet 44 The Secretary accepted the order, and immediately began to prepare for the occasion But Samartha, taking his begging bag in his hand, went into the town. 45 Seeing Ramdas doing this his disciples hastened after him, and quickly brought back their begging bags full of food Samartha then sat for his bath. 46 Having completed all prescribed rites he then annointed the image of Maruti, pouring over it the five nectars, and dressed it in beautiful garments 47 By means of the fragrant pastes, rice garlands of flowers incense, lights, camphor, and daintily cooked food offered to Him, Māruti was pleased 48 He circumambulated the image and prostrated himself before it By this time the Brahmans had come from their baths, and plates for them were arranged in long lines. 49 After the Brahmans had been duly worshipped, the food was served on their plates Then after the offering ceremony all the Brahmans sat down to eat 50 There were many kinds of delicious dishes, and the Brahmans ate until fully satisfied And having given them *pāna supari* and various favours, again Māruti was pleased. 51 Then the other citizens of the town who had to wait, now sat down in the same line with Samartha The king s attendants also sat down with him to eat, and all were fully satisfied 52 As soon as the sun began to set, Rāmdās began his *kirtana*, Uddhava Gosāvi, the *bhakta* of his *sadguru* first lovingly sang the names and the epithets of God 53 Other Vaishnavas also led in the *kirtana*. Then finally Samartha arose to perform in his kindly way, to the joy of all hearts present

54 The Giver of final Deliverance [Rāmdās] lovingly shouted aloud "Victory, Victory to the noble Rāma' While

performing the *kirtana* he danced to the music of the instruments 55 In listeing to his *kirtana* hearts became indifferent to worldly things and through *bhakti* and knowledge men started on the path that leads to final deliverance 56 To begin with Rāmdās repeated some *abhangas* containing thoughts on love to God I have quoted these attractive verses in this chapter Listen attentively to them you pious ones

(*Abhangas* not translated)

57 As hearers listened to Samartha s gracious voice they were filled with joy Some had the desire aroused to become his disciples and received from him the initiatory *mantra* 58 Men and women were enraptured and to them Samartha said Worship Shri Rāma without ceasing and then you can carry on in joy your domestic life 59 Rāma should be worshipped with all your heart There are ten millions of hindrances that cross one s path in life therefore you should worship Maruti with a sense of plea sure and no sins will remain in you. 60 Following these words hands clapped and cries of Victory Victory were uttered. By the sound of those cries all space was densely filled. 61 Then lighting the lights and singing the final hymns of praise Shri Rama and Maruti had the lights waved over them They were bowed to and the final distribution of sweetmeats took place 62 Then Samartha sat before the image of Maruti and composed an *abhanga* Listen to it with attention It contains a promise of gracious blessing

1 I bow to Hanumana who cause me to meet with Rāma

He quiest the millions of hindrances

2 Rāma greatly loves his worshippers
He becomes their advocate and protects them.

3 He is for Rāmdās the great and supreme object for thought
In a moment's time the longings of his sincere heart are fulfilled

63 While thus performing his *kirtana* the sun arose, and the people of the towns around who had come there now went back to their homes

RĀMDĀS GOES TO SEE HIS PARENTS

64 After remaining three days at Tākalī, Samartha, with all his following, left with the intention in his heart of visiting his mother and father 65 They, therefore, marched along the bank of the Godāvarī river in a happy mood *Kirtanas* were performed regularly, and people came out from their villages to see and honor Rāmdās

66 In this way they arrived at Jāmba, and encamped outside of the town Messengers were then despatched to call at once the Patila [Mayor] of the town 67. Invitations also were sent to the Deshmukhas, Deshpandes, and Mahajanas [Government officials] to come and meet Ramdās With the exception of the Kulakarni [Rāmdās' father] all were to be brought to meet Ramdās 68 The obedient messengers went at once into the town The Jumedār [A Government official] was sitting in the town hall The messengers said to him 69 " Rāmdās, the *guru* of King Shivājī, is encamped outside of the town Come at once to welcome him". 70 Hearing this message, the town officer made himself ready, and came to meet Rāmdās with joy in his heart 71 Many of the men and women of the town assembled to go, and welcomed him, as also the Brahmans of the town Just then the messengers said to the [illegible] arni [Rāmdās' father] "You are forbidden to come " 72 Thus the inhabitants of the town, assembling in a great crowd, came out of the town. Samartha was seated

on a throne and all seeing him made him a *namaskāra* 73 The Patila presented him with an offering, and Samartha returned it to him The Patila looked intently at him and then the people began to talk among themselves 74 "I see a wen on his forehead Suryājipanta s son had one just like it It is many days since he went far from here, and lived to the full his life of indifference-to-worldly things 75 Another said 'While his marriage was being performed he slipped away from behind the curtain, and abandoned his wife His brother and parents have been mourning for him ever since 76 Now suddenly the Brahman town astrologer recognized Rāmdās and addressed this question to the *svami* In what town do you live? 77 Samartha looked upwards and smiling said ' My town is Panchavati. I have come to visit you ' 78 Hearing this, the man said You are Suryajipanta s son I know, and your name is Narayana Now I remember you 79 The Patila then gave an order to go at once and call his father Samartha opposed it and remarked Why do an improper act? 80 One should not call his *sadguru* and parents to come to him He should go to visit them And with this Samartha hastily arose 81 and with a supreme desire in his heart walked rapidly away on foot In the meanwhile some of the towns people ran and told his father 82 When his mother heard the news that was to her joy her heart was full of happiness It was like return to Ayodhya of Rama after he had endured his long abode in the forests 83 On that day his mother Kausalyā felt her breasts swell with love It was just such joy that the parents of Ramdas felt when they heard the news

THE MEETING OF RĀMDĀS AND HIS PARENTS

84 Just then Ramdas accompanied by a crowd arrived at his parents home The Vaishnava *bhakta* prostrated himself on the ground before his father 85 He bowed to his

brother, and they then lovingly embraced one another. Just then his mother came out of the house, and Rāmdās bowed to her. 86. The mother could not contain her feelings. Rānubāī was overcome by her love. She embraced Rāmdās, and lovingly held him to her heart. 87. Tears flowed from her eyes She tried to restrain her sobs, but could not. Then she exclaimed· "O Nārāyana, how was it that you deserted me? 88 In the very midst of your marriage you displayed your indifference to worldly things, and you ran off into the forest You did not take notice of us, and now you return as a Gosāvī". 89 Seeing his mother's intense love, Samartha was disturbed in mind. Then thinking to himself that he should remove from her mind her wrong ideas, he there and then composed *abhangas.*

(*Abhangas* not translated)

90 After listening to Rāmdās' expression of his thoughts, his parents felt happy They said: "Into our family line has been born a Saviour of our race, a chief jewel of *bhaktas*" 91 Samarth's brother's name was Rāmī Rāmdās Both were of one mind There was no difference of thought between them 92 As in the case of Rāma and Bharata, each loving the other intensely, so was it with Rāmī Rāmdās and Samartha There was no difference of thought between them

RĀMDĀS RETURNS TO SĀTĀRĀ

93 Such was the meeting together of Samartha with parents and brother. He then went into the town to beg his food. The people looked at him in astonishment 94. They remarked: "The king and his subjects are his suppliants, and yet he, (Samartha), eats what he gains by begging His indifference to worldly things is strict It is the gift of God"

95. A feast was prepared at Rāmdās' home, and delicious dishes of many kinds were cooked. All the Brahmans of the town came to the feast. Samartha performed the ceremony of worshipping them. 96. When all the plates were served, Sūryājīpanta made the offering ceremony. All ate and were satisfied, and then Samartha began a *kirtana*. 97. Rāmdās remained there three days, then taking his mother, father and brother with him, he started to return, riding on horseback. 98. Rānubāī rode in the palanquin, Sūryājīpanta sat in the chair on an elephant. His brother was carried in an easy chair. Samartha rode horse back. 99. All the officials of the town came a long distance with them to see them off. They pleaded with Samartha that he would make them another visit soon. 100. Rāmdās said to them: "I have no reason for coming back here. After I introduce my parents to the king, I shall send them back here to their home." 101. With those words Rāmdās sent the people of the town back to their homes. Rāmdās' procession moved forward while the band played vigorously. 102. In whatever town they encamped, there they honoured the Brahmans with feasts and gifts. There was always a *kirtana* at night, and then they offered their respects to slumber. 103. Samartha attended to the wants of his parents with his own hands. Continuing their journey in this manner, they finally reached Sātārā.

KING SHIVĀJĪ WELCOMES RĀMDĀS' PARENTS

104. Samartha encamped in a garden outside of the city, and there performed his bath. In the meantime the Secretary sent two messengers to inform the king 105. When the messengers informed the king that Samartha was encamped in the garden along with his mother, father, and brother, he was very delighted. 106. He gave orders to his Ministers to go and escort the *swāmi*, to have the army ready, and all preparation made to

honor them 107 As soon as the command was given, every thing was in readiness The elephants, chariots and horses started, the Ministers accompanying them. The king went on foot 108 Thus in great joy the king arrived at the garden As soon as he saw Samartha while yet at a distance, he prostrated himself on the ground before him 109 As soon however, as he approached near him, he made him eleven *namaskāras* The Merciful-one [Rāmdās] raised the king up and cordially embraced him

110 The king then said ' Samartha, where are your parents "? The Secretary pointed them out with his hand and the king felt very glad to see them 111 The king bowed prostrate on the ground before the three He embraced them lovingly and exclaimed ' Blessed is this auspicious day 112 Samartha has brought about just what I had wanted and then with pleasure worshipped them 113 With his own hands he sprinkled fragrant powders on them and placed garland of flowers around their necks After this welcoming ceremony the procession again took up its march

114 Suryajipanta with his elder son sat in the chair on the elephant Samartha was seated in a palanquin, and Shivāji himself walked beside him flourishing over him the fly whisk. 115 The eight Ministers came along with them and all space was more than filled by the sound of the musical instruments The people of the city, young and old hurried to pay their respects 116 When they arrived at the great gate of the palace, the king did a most unusual thing He took a handful of gold coins and waved them over his *satguru* 117 He then scattered them about which mendicants hastened to pick up. As Samartha entered the palace guns were fired 118 The *swami* was then seated on the throne The king held his feet in his hands The Ministers flourished the fly whisks

about him, and preparations were started for feasting. 119. The king bathed Rāmdās, and then began to worship him. He clothed him in a bright yellow garment, and put on him ornaments studded with jewels. 120 Garments of gold brocade, garlands of flowers, incense, lights, and offerings were presented to him. The Brahmans repeated *mantras*, and people shouted "Vicrory, Victory." 121 Samartha ate the food that was given him as an offering The king gave him water for the washing of his hands The lights for the wave offering were then lighted, and the king waved them over his *sadguru* 122. The king gave him a bouquet of flowers, and then circumambulated him The king was supremely happy Furthermore he honored Samartha's father and mother in the same way 123 He gave the three guests garments and ornaments In the meantime the feast was made ready, and the Brahmans were seated in rows 124 The king s Secretary performed the ceremony of worshipping the Brahmans The delicious food was then served The *svāmi* made the offering ceremony 125 Whatever any one wanted that was served to him, and all were well satisfied. The king distributed to all the *pāna supāri*, and *dakshinā*. 126 The king showed his love by eating from off the same plate Samartha had used He cast aside the *Brahma* juice and accepted his *sadguru s* gracious gift 127. The king performed the ceremony of cleansing the mouth, and then the feasting of all was finished When it was night, a *kirtana* was commenced, and all sat down to listen 128 Ramī Ramdas [the brother] performed a *katha* its subject being in agreement with the Vedas, Shastras and Bhagavats The Brahmans listened to it with pleasure Panditas wagged their heads to express their delight . 129 There were songs in various metres and dancing in harmony with the singing There was the music of cymbals and drums all carried on at the same time 130. The deeds of Rama

and Krishna, and other *avatāras*, were fully set forth, and there were frequent outbursts of repetition of God s names and cries of Victory, Victory." 131 In this way the *kīrtana* lasted until the third watch of the night, as a Hari watch night service The lights were then lighted, and waved, over the Husband-of Jānakī [Rāma] 132 After the *kirtana* was finished, sweetmeats were distributed to all present. Samartha then laid down to rest and the king stood by him 133 Samartha said to the king 'The Brahmans were asking you about my family connections You can now inform them. 134 I have brought my parents here because there was a suspicion in their minds So now question my parents and put an end to their doubts' 135. After listening to Samartha's remark, the king placed his head at his feet and said ' Because of remarks of those *strict observers of religious formalities,* I took an undue liberty, and asked (about your parents) 136 You *Svāmi*, who knows the hearts of all have removed the doubts of all."

RĀMDĀS' PARENTS RETURN TO THEIR HOME AT JĀMBA

After a month had passed in this way, during which the king served him 137 Samartha said to the king "I have made you acquainted with my parents Now start them on their way home I have to go into the forest" 138. The king replied "Your wish is my command" He then worshipped the parents and gave them garments, ornaments, and adornments 139 He supplied them with a horse and carriage, and some money for the expenses of the journey The king also honored the members of their family at home 140 He had copper plates made and had them inscribed giving them the deed of ownership of Jāmba, and placed his royal seal upon it In this way he gave them exceptional honor 141 The king placed the copper plates in Suryājipanta's hands and to Samartha's mother he

said 142 "Blessed, blessed are your good deeds of a former birth, in that you gave birth to Samartha He has saved the world, O mother In the future he will save countless numbers 143 Dhruva was born to Sumati The *bhakta* Pralhada was born to Kayādhu, Hanumanta was born to Anjani and joined himself to Rāma. 144 In that same way, you Mother, have given us a Universal *Guru* before our very eyes" After praising her thus, the king fell at her feet 145 The king alone on horse back saw them off on their way

In the mean time Samartha took Dattu with him, and retired into the forest 146 He cast aside all his garments and ornaments, and gladly wore only his clout, and made his way into the forest where it was the most dense

147 In the next chapter the Giver-of eternal-life will Himself be the narrator in words that give delight Mahipati merely obeys his command, and utters the words that carry favors

148 *Swasti*. This book, the Santavijaya by merely listening to it, all the longings of the heart are fulfilled Let the wise hearers listen. This is the seventh delightful chapter

---

CHAPTER VIII.

MAHIPATI DESCRIBES HIS UNFITNESS FOR HIS TASK

1 The innocent babe babbles meaningless words before its mother But the mother is merely amused by it, and supplies the babe with what it wants 2. And so I have no skill no cleverness no power of imagination I have not listened to many philosophical books I have not the poetic talent, nor have I a great intellect I do not know ways of forming similies. 3 My heart is also not pure My mind is entangled in domestic affairs and occupations There is no God-loving friend who would carefully examine my book. 4. I am constantly employed in this miserable little town I am without association with good men I am dull minded, and of weak understanding, such is the lame Mahipati 5 But although I am such, I have conceived the strong desire to narrate the good deeds of Thy saints, so, O God, fulfil the desire of my heart. 6. Trusting in Thee, O Shri Hari, I compose in uncouth words, but Thou pervadest every heart, and this is my firm belief 7 And so now by Thy power, and because Thou art a Cloud-of-Mercy, cause my mind to recollect, and give me the gift of loving expression such as will be acceptable to saints and all good men.

RĀMDĀS GLORIES IN HIS SIMPLE FOREST LIFE

8 In the last delightful chapter we learned of Samartha's going to his birthplace, where he met his parents, whom he brought to Sātārā 9 He remained a month with his parents, and honored them in many ways The king saw them off on their way (back to Jāmba), and then returned to Sātārā 10 Here he found to his surprise that his *Sadguru* left all his garments and adorn-

ments, and had gone into the forests. The barber Dattu was also not to be found. The king now understood what it all meant.

11 Samartha, with a joyous heart, began again his happy life in the forest. He thoroughly enjoyed this mode of living in complete indifference to worldly things 12 His thought was "Father, mother and brother are without doubt a part of the illusion of *Māyā* The honor paid me by the king is illusory It is Rama alone who is with me 13 The devotion of men to things of this life is illusory How can one find in it eternal joy? People, with hearts full of desires, worship whatever they think is miraculous 14 For a few days I was entangled in earthly things because of deeds I had done in a former birth. But now whether among men or alone in the forests, I want Rāma alone 15. Shrī Rama is my mother and father Rāma is my close friend and brother He is my best friend, my sister and uncle I have no one, but Rāma. 16 Shrī Rama is my ancestry Rama is my dearest relative The all powerful *Sadguru* Rama is my saviour from the ocean of this worldly existence 17 With such thoughts this dweller in the forest happily occupied his mind He also sang songs in praise of Rama that even bewitched the wild animals 18. Tigers wolves hares and dear, wandered about him and forgetting all enmity, came as suppliants to Samartha

19 Dattu, the barber went daily into the town to beg for food, and brought back the flour given him Samartha made this into cakes baked on leaves and then the two ate them with pleasure 20 Because of his association with tigers and wolves, people were afraid and dared not come near him But the king, leaving his body guard at a distance used to come alone into Samartha's presence 21. After feasting his eyes on his *sadguru*, he would worship

him in his usual way Samartha would then ask him to leave, and he would then return to his palace

A WORLDLY MINDED BRAHMAN VISITS RĀMDĀS

22 There was a Brahman belonging to Mahuli who was absolutely illiterate On that account he was unable to earn money, and consequently had to remain unmarried 23 *He used to wander alone from house to house, to get* his belly full But in his heart there was the snare of worldly desires How then could he possess the Supreme-spiritual riches? 24 This snare of worldly desires was a great hindrance to him It brought him dishonor A saint who possesses worldly desires meets with popular disapproval and scorn 25 A householder, with such desires may try to please his patron But his wife is ungrateful and shows no feelings of regret (for her ingratitude) 26 *A man may have studied* the Vedas, and become a wise and expert pandita but because his desires lead to malice, he fails to attain the Supreme-spiritual riches 27 One becomes a naked mendicant, and wanders in the forest But even here that desire hinders him, and he stretches out his hand for gain 28 One enters the order of a *sanyāsi*, but his tongue does not like common food. So through his longing for good food, he becomes separated from God 29 One performs austerities, holds his arm upright, or hangs head down over a smoking fire Even he may stretch out his hand towards men for the sake of gain Thus he also is hindered by Desire 30 Thus Desire is an arch enemy She has deceived many a seeker after final Deliverance If Shri Hari will have mercy on any one then only his mind will be at rest, without this Desire for worldly things

31. Now God had placed this worldly minded Brahman alone in this world He had no family cares But Desire for worldly things prevented his mind from being

at peace. 32. Wherever any one was giving away money in charity, there he would rush, even to a far distance. But although he was always receiving from many sources, still he gained but little money. 33. Days in which he received excellent food, he would eat with great satisfaction. But if he saw before him common food, he ate it grumblingly. 34. When previous to this, king Shivājī had given a feast in honor of his *sadguru*, he was there sitting in a row with the others. He was for ever remembering this. 35. So the thought occurred to him: "I will make Rāmdās my *guru*. I will become his disciple, and then I shall always have delicious food. 36. Besides this, he being the king's *guru*, the king will connect me with him, as if I was his brother. People will pay me respect and honor." Such were the thoughts of his mind. 37. This Brahman then, with his worldly desires, went into the dense forest to hunt for Rāmdās. Finally he saw Samartha at a distance carressing a tiger. 38. The Brahman was frightened: "If I go near, the tiger will eat me up," he thought. He trembled with fear and made no haste to go near Rāmdās. 39. When Samartha saw him he called out to him: "O Brahman, don't be afraid. The tiger will not kill you. Come at once." 40. Hearing Samartha call him, he said to himself: "This seems a miraculous thing." The Brahman came near, and made Rāmdās a *namaskāra*. 41. The *Svāmī* asked him where he was going. The man replied: "I am wandering about for the sake of a livelihood. 42. I was unable to see any town even at a distance, and I was in great fear of this tiger, so I thought if I could have a sight of you, *Svāmī*, my mind would gain courage. 43. I feel as though I would like to become your disciple, O Samartha. And for that purpose I have come to you. Give me now your assuring blessing." 44. Rāmdās questioned him: "Who have you at home? Tell me truly. Do not tell me a falsehood." 45. The man replied: "I have no

wife or children My father and mother have both died. I am entirely alone in my home 46. All snares have been destroyed I want to join myself to some saint I feel that in so doing I shall cease to care for food or clothing" 47 Whatever is the true desire of any one's heart, it becomes revealed in his speech. Samartha understood what was in the man's heart, and that he was not a worthy candidate for discipleship 48 It had merely passed through his mind to unite himself to a *sadguru* It would give him a public reputation, but it could not be from sincerity of feeling 49 When a person does not perceive the difference between what he should do and what he should not do between duty to do and duty not to do, such a man cannot understand the easy path to the Supreme-spiritual riches Such an one bears the name of one characterized by being in bondage 50 This Brahman appears to me a worldly minded seeker after earthly desires. He is merely a "Dinner brother Shri Rāma Himself has said that one should not give the initiatory *mantra* to those who were not *bhaktas* 51 Well, whatever is really in His [Rāma s] mind will hereafter come to pass A cloud pours rain equally, and let us act in the same manner

52 So Samartha said to him "Sir, go and take your bath. I will then tell you what will help you to the Supreme-spiritual-riches Make no delay" 53 Listening to what Rāmdās said, he went and came back from his bath He placed a garland of flowers around Rāmdās' neck and then stood before him with hands joined palm to palm. 54 At Samartha's bidding he made him eleven *namaskāras* and then according to custom Rāmdās gave him the *mantra*. 55. Just then Dattu, the barber, returned with the results of his begging He placed the begging bag before Rāmdās, and made a prostrate bow before him 56 Samartha came back from his bath, and then began to prepare the food.

He made cakes baked on leaves, and served them to the two disciples. 57. Samartha ate the cakes along with Dattu with enjoyment. But the Brahman grumbled in his mind, for his tongue had no liking for such food. 58. Just then King Shivājī arrived for seeing and worshipping Rāmdās. He bowed on the ground before him and worshipped him according to the prescribed custom. 59. Of the delicious food offerings that the king brought, Rāmdās distributed a little to the people as a favor, and what was left he distributed to the monkeys. Samartha himself ate none of it. 60. There was one of Rāmdās' cakes remaining which Samartha gave to the king. The king took it with supreme delight, and ate it there and then. 61. When the Brahman saw this he was astonished. He said to himself : "This is food obtained by begging, and moreover is what has been left over, and yet the king eats it with pleasure."

62. The king took leave of Samartha, and worshipping him left for Sātārā. The Brahman was hungry from his fasting, and was unable to sleep. 63. The next day Rāmdās took Dattu along with him, and went into the town to beg for food. They said to the Brahman : " Come along with us. 64. Which will you do, remain here in this forest, or come with us into the town to beg for our food ?" He replied : " I am afraid to remain here. There are so many wild animals here." 65. So the Brahman went with them. He begged from house to house, but he felt ashamed of doing so. 66. When it was noon Samartha returned; then performed his bath, and baked and ate the cakes he had made. 67. The man became much disturbed in his mind. He thought to himself : "Path for attaining the Supreme-spiritual-riches is too hard for me. I cannot fill my belly with those cakes, and I cannot beg from house to house. 68. Knowing that he was the *guru* of the king, I was glad to become his disciple, but it is evident I can-

not get any delicious food here, and I have been fasting for three days 69 Not long ago a thousand Brahmans dined with him, and now he lives in this terrible forest It is I who am an unfortunate one 70 I dived into the ocean for pearls, and brought up a handful of sand. That is because Fate had so written in my destiny 71 The king brings Ramdas choice food and he throws it to the monkeys Then he gives those dry leaf cakes to us two disciples and himself eats them with pleasure 72 The king eats those cakes dry just like a glutton I cannot stay with him to the end was his final decision 73 So the Brahman said to Samartha *Swāmi*, give me leave to go I want to go to-day to another town. My mind is not content here 74 Rāmdās said to him By all means go but come to see me some other time And hold in your heart what I have sincerely told you " 75 The man made him a *namaskara* and left for another town where he wandered from house to house in hope of an invitation to dine 76 Some said to him ' Here is some bread and greens. Accept them if you will He replied

If there is any special celebration going on show me the house" 77 People replied ' Go to the Deshmukha's house There is a feast taking place there in honor of a great man." 78 The Brahman went there at the appointed time the dishes were served he was seated with the guests As he ate the dainty food with every mouthful he felt satisfaction 79 He said to himself ' For the last three days I have not had proper food, but today I have eaten all I wanted. It has been a good day for me ' 80 And when he received the *pāna-supāri* and the gifts of money, he was especially pleased He thought I would like to remain with this man always" Such was the desire he conceived 81 With this hope in his mind, he went to see that good man and made him a *namaskāra*, adding this request 82 "The desire has come to me to remain with you always.

So instruct me and keep me with you " 83 The good man asked him "Where is the place you live? What is the name of the town? Tell me " 84 The man replied · "I live at Māhuli, at the river junction I have no snare of wife or son. Therefore, I wander about sadly 85 As I had no permanent place for eating, I became a disciple of Rāmdās, the *guru* of the king But he lives in the forest. 86 His indifference to worldly things is of a very strict kind Going into the town, he begs for flour, and then makes cakes without even using salt I cannot endure them " 87 When the good man heard these words, he understood what was in that man's heart, and so he said to himself "He has a gluttonous desire for choice food. He seems one whom Fortune has deserted. 88 Ramdās is truly a world guru. He is an *avatāra* of Maruti In order to save the world he has manifested himself as a man in this mortal world' 89 Thus thinking to himself, the good man said to the Brahman "You became the disciple of one, and now why have you come to me? 90 Because a mother is weak, she should not be abandoned by her child Another woman may be more beautiful, but her breasts will not swell to nurse another's child 91 To leave one's first *guru* and seek for another, is a disgraceful act. How can such a man attain the Supreme-spiritual-riches? Such an one is worthy of rebirths and redeaths 92 Although you were unable to endure the forest life in company with Samartha, still you should be meditating on the *mantra* he gave you 93 If a *sadguru*, seeing the sincerity of some one, comes into his town it is right you should make him a *namaskāra*, offering him *tulsi* leaves 94 But to become a disciple of one, and then go to another as a suppliant for disicpleship, is an act contrary to scripture Saints and all good men laugh at such " 95 The good man tried hard to impress him with his teaching, but that ignorant fellow

was not impressed He fell at the good man's feet, and said "Give me, Sir, the *mantra* making me your disciple" 96 Wherever this good man was invited to dine there he also would go with him Said he "Please don't leave this place before you give me the *mantra*" 97 The good man said to him 'Go back to Samartha and give his *mantra* back to him and then come to me" 98 After listening to the good man's word, the Brahman went into the forest He saw Samartha's abiding place, but Samartha was nowhere to be seen 99 He was in great fear of the wild beasts, and wandered about a long time in the forest Finally, however, he saw Ramdās enjoying himself on the bank of the Krishnā, and said to him 100 "I have seen another good *guru* Take back the *mantra* you gave me." When Samartha heard him say this, he was much astonished 101 He replied "If I should make a search, I could not find so true a disciple as you Why do you wish to return the *mantra*? What fault have you found in me?' 102 The man replied "I found that your path to the Supreme-spiritual-riches was too difficult. You wander about day and night in the forest and eat those leaf-cakes." 103 Samartha replied 'Listen Take some water in your mouth, and then spit the mouthful on to the ground That will make you free of a *guru*.' 104. Following this suggestion of Samartha's, the undevout man spat a mouthful of water on to the ground. Without any intention on his part it formed thirteen syllables on the ground 105 Rāmdās now said to him 'You can go now as a suppliant to some other *guru*. Nothing of mine now remains with you. Look at the syllables on the ground. 106 "I shall do so" said the Brahman, and he returned to the town where the other Saint was. But when he went to bathe to perform his morning prayer, he found that he could not remember the *Gāyatri mantra* 107 He found himself overpowered by drowsiness and sleep His body lacked

energy But the Brahman aroused himself, and went into the town. 108 He met the great man, and told him all the news "I have thrown away the *mantra* that Rāmdās had given me Now instruct me, and make me your disciple" 109 The good man asked him how he had thrown away his *mantra*? He replied "I spat out a mouthful of water, and it formed thirteen syllables on the ground.' 110 The good man was astonished and said " Blessed are the deeds of Samartha. No one has ever seen such a miracle before. 111. That *mantra* of thirteen syllables was given to Maruti by Rāma. That you should throw away that *mantra* makes it seem that you are one whom good fortune has deserted. 112 The *mantra* that Samartha taught you is the same that I teach. If it once is spit out of the mouth, it is impossible for it to return again 113 To make one a disciple who already is a disciple of another is a great wrong So go away from here You cannot be my disciple ' 114 Being rejected in this way, it upset the right relationship he should have had He was like one who rejected the wish cow, and sought for a milk cow 115 It was as when one puts his hand to a cow s udder, she should kick him off He is doubly lost And so it was with this Brahman

116 He who is the slave of his appetite he whose mind is entangled in the desires for worldly things, and yet at the same time has the wish aroused in him to have a share in the Supreme spiritual riches [*paramārtha*] 117 He should seek for a *sadguru* who is a householder, and a God-loving pious man, with an unusual worshipful spirit, and finds peace of heart through the joy of love 118 Whose mind is impressed with indifference to worldly things and does never forget the contemplation of Hari, and who by his worshipful spirit sings the praises of Vishnu 119 A seeker after Final deliverance [*mumu-*

kshu], and yet one who has to live in this busy world, must go as a suppliant to such a *guru* He must hold in his heart what he is told and he must serve his *guru* in the following way 120 If he possesses the means, he should send money and grain to his *sadguru* He should so arrange it that his *sadguru* may not have any anxiety about his domestic affairs. 121 After finishing his own work, he should go to his *swāmi's* house to pay him respects. He who acts thus will be saved in the ocean of this worldly existence, and escape from the eightyfour cycles of rebirths and deaths 122 A person who is financially weak, and yet has become a disciple of his *sadguru* he should perform some physical labour for him, and thus obtain the blessing of his *guru's* favour 123 Any one who performs various lowly forms of work in the house of his *swāmi*, Shri Hari shows his mercy to such, and saves him from the ocean of this worldly life 124 One should go as a suppliant to one who has no selfish desires, and become as he is Just as a filthy stream after joining the Ganges obtains its name, and falls into the sea. 125 One might through Fate have the brilliancy of Aruna [the Sun's charioteer] He would then sit in the sun's chariot, and be of the same spherical shape as the sun.

126 Such was the relationship to Samartha of those sincere seekers after final Deliverance who came as suppliants to him The *swāmi* accepted them, and made for them a name on this round earth. 127 Thus blest was king Shivāji, who, knowing Samartha's heart, continually hunted for him in the forest, in order to worship and make him *namaskāras* 128 However, relatives, officials, panditas, Vedic Brahmans, friends and Brahmans in l spoke insultingly of Rāmdās before and behind him. 129 They call him "Crazy Rāmdās" The king has become his disciple and has become even more crazy

than he, we think 130 Whatever money there was in the royal treasury, he has spent on his *guru*, and becoming totally unconscious of body like king Janaka, wanders on foot through the forest 131 Samartha belongs to the genus of monkey Ornaments studded with jewels were placed upon him, but he cast them all away, and hastened into the forest' 132 Such were the many insulting remarks of the evil minded But the king s determination was unchangeable He was all the time worshipping Ramdās, and forgetting the cares of worldly things.' 133 From the very first the king had a great desire to visit saints and he used to listen to the stories in the Bhāgavata In listening to them his heart gained a sense of peace 134 There was one Nimbaraja Bāva of Daithana whose *avatara* Tukarama was With closest attention he listened to many stories regarding him 135 The blessed words of the saints the king held in his mind, Therefore when he saw Samartha his devotion to a *guru* reached its height 136 In the past there have been kings who were like statues of good deeds whose praises have been sung in the Puranas But just so in this *Kali yuga* king Shivaji has been chosen for his devotion to his *guru*

137 He who is Merciful-to-the lowly the Giver-of final Deliverance will continue to speak through me his blessed words Mahipati having received his assurance not to fear, is ready to sing the praises of the saints

138 Svasti This book, the Santavijaya by the mere listening to it the longings of one s heart are fulfilled May the wise pious saints listen This is the eighth delightful chapter

---

CHAPTER IX.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH THE SAINTS OF OLD

1. Victory, Victory, to Thee Shrī Hari, Thou art the dweller on the sea of milk, the Recliner-on the Serpent Shesha, the Unchangeable one When Thy *bhaktas* are in difficulty Thou hast acted for their relief, in many an *avatāra* 2 Thou didst assume the Fish and Tortoise *avatāras*, also the Nrisinha, Vamana and Bhārgava *avatāras* Thou didst assume the names of Rāma and Krishna for Thy servants to sing of them 3 In this *Kaliyuga*, Thou didst become the Buddha *avatāra* The great rishis have written of them in the Puranas, but seeing the great love of Thy *bhaktas*, Thou hast spoken to them directly in very loving words 4 Seeing Nāmadeva's devotion, Thou, Husband-of Rukminī, didst eat with him Thou didst move forward the wall on which Dnyānadeva was sitting, a deed that *sādhus* and saints sing of in their *kirtanas*. 5 The simple-minded *bhakta*, Dāmajipanta, allowed the king's grainary to be looted by all the Brahmans Thou becamest Vithu Nāyaka, the adopted son of Dāmājipanta and didst protect him 6 Kūrmadasa, a criple without hands or feet, started to go on a pilgrimage to Pandharī. Thou didst go to meet him as far as Lahula, and gave him a vision of Thyself 7 Thou, Lord-of-Pandharī, didst ask Sānvatyā Mālī for a place in which to hide He ripped open his abdomen, and hid you in his heart 8 It was Nama, the tailor, the God loving *bhakta*,] who drew Thee out Therefore, all the saints speak of Thee as the child of Sānvatā Mālī. 9 Narahari, the Goldsmith, was a *bhakta* of Shiva. Seeing his determination, O Vitthala, even up to day, wearest Thou on Thy head the symbol of Shiva. 10 The devotion of Rāmdās was fixed on Rāma, and knowing

his heart, Thou didst take a bow and arrow, in Thy hand. 11 Do Thou, O Husband-of Rukmini, relate his story in detail I am truly dull of mind, who does not know even how to form letters into words

RĀMDĀS GOES TO PANDHARAPURA

12 In the last chapter there was contained the story of the undevout disciple, who threw away his *mantra*. He spit out the mouthful of water on to the ground, and there it formed the thirteen syllables 13 Suddenly the king appeared again. With sincerity he worshipped the Giver-of-final Deliverance Then at the command of Samartha he returned to his place

14 After the above events Ramdas indifferent to all worldly things, went down to the bank of the Krishnā, where he quietly amused himself Just then a large band of pilgrims arrived, and encamped at that spot 15 Some fastened bells to their feet and danced here and there. They worshipped one another not being able to restrain their enthusiasm 16 Some took *vinas* and clappers in their hands, and sang the *abhangas* of Tukarama They lovingly described the greatness of Pandhari, and finally lost all bodily consciousness 17 There were many bands carrying banners who with loud cries took Vitthala s name Seeing them doing these things Ramdas, asked them very politely 18 Where is this pilgrim band going to? They replied 'We are going to Pandhari' This was their reply on the bank of the Krishna as they prepared to encamp 19 They pitched their tents, and settled down for the night When the sun was set Ramdās sat in meditation bringing the Husband of Sita [Rama] to mind 20 As he was thus remembering Rama, the Dweller in-Ayodhya revealed Himself Ramdas offered Him fruit and worshipped both Shri Rāma and Maruti 21 Then sitting absorbed in his thought he began to describe

the goodness of Shri Rāma. The pilgrims, seeing him in this attitude, came near him, and made him a *namaskāra*. 22 The saints and good people in that company said to Rāmdās "You should come with us to Pandharī It will please all of us Please agree to our request" 23 Rāmdās replied "What deity is there? Tell me minutely, and who had a direct visual manifestation? and whom shall I see in visible form?' 24 The saints replied "The deity is Krishna, the eighth *avatāra*, who voluntarily assuming a human body lived at Dvārakā, but has come to this place 25 There was a good *bhakta*, named Pundalika who devoted himself to his parents' service God supreme felt the burden of necessity to reward him for his devotion, and so, He came to see him 26 The Life-of-the-World said to Pundalika "I am pleased with you Though you may ask for the promise of a seeming impossible gift, still I shall certainly give it to you" 27. Pundalika replied 'Remain here forever, O God, with Thy feet parallel on the brick, and Thy two hands on Thy hips 28 The deity, the sacred place, the devotion of the *bhakta*, and devotion should be known by one (Zodiacal) name alone So change Thy name and call Thyself willingly Pānduranga 29 God supreme Lord-of-the-Universe, with Thy sight directed to the point of Thy nose, remain here on the bank of the Bhimā for the sake of protecting Thy *bhaktas* in all times of distress" 30 To this request the Life-of-the-World replied "I accept This sacred city of Pandharī will be a purifying place, a heaven in the land of the mortals" 31 For this reason the sacred place is called Pandharī Pānduranga is the helper of His *bhaktas* For the sake of His *bhakta*, Pundalika, He remained there at the door of His *bhakta*, Pundalika, on the bank of the Bhimā. 32 In this *Kaliyuga* there have been many *bhaktas*, who have gone as suppliants to Him, and have had direct visual manifestations of Him, a fact that has

become known world wide 33 Bhānudasa, a Vaishnava *bhakta*, Nivrittideva and Dnyānadeva, Sanvatā Mali, and Namdeva had a firm devotion to Vitthala. 34 Kurmadāsa, the God-loving *bhakta*, Gorā, the potter, a man of intense devotion, Janardana and Ekanatha, all these worshipped Panduranga. 35 And other saints also have gone as suppliants to Vithoba So you must come to Pandhari " Thus the saints pleaded with Rāmdās 36 Samartha replied to them 'Shri Rama is my family deity Aside from Him my heart finds no resting place What am I to do in his case? 37 My eyes long day and night to see the Bearer of-the bow [Rama], and I want to listen only to the story of Rama s related by Valmiki 38 The pilgrims recognized Ramda's determination not to go with them, and they left for Pandharapura Suddenly another band of pilgrims came to the bank of the Krishna and encamped for the night 39 Samartha sang of Shri Rama. The pilgrim saints spoke to him and urged him to go with them to Pandhari 40 Ramdas replied 'If the Lord-of-Ayodhya [Rama] is there take me along with you If He is not there, my desire to go there is insufficient 41. The saints replied Rama pervades every place Using the eye of knowledge you must recognize Him as in yourself 42 Hearing this remark, Samartha composed two *abhangas* I quote them in this book Listen to them you pious people

(*Abhangas* not translated)

43 Hearing Ramdas verses the saints were astonished and the poets among them remarked to one another on the fixed determination of Ramdas 44 The *chataka* bird will not drink water that is on the earth An infant cannot be comforted without its mother The *chakora* bird waits for moonbeams Therefore, all these (cloud, mother and moon) have the power of concentration 45 A

dutiful wife does not care to listen to any stories except those about her husband So Ramdās' heart cared for no one but Rāma. 46 After their vain pleading with Rāmdas the band of pilgrims left And now Shripati (Rāma) Himself was impressed by the *bhakti* of Rāmdās, which had but one object and performed a wonder 47 And so the Life-of-the-World immediately manifested Himself in the form of a Brahman Rāmdas had just finished his bath, and had prepared the leaf cakes 48 Just as he was serving the cakes he saw the Brahman He made him a *namaskāra* and invited him to eat 49 'This is food obtained by begging Please accept it Through your mouth Shri Rāma is always satisfied." 50 Hearing these words of Rāmdas, Chakrapani (Vishnu) answered "This was the wish of my heart, and hunting for you in the forest I have arrived' 51 The Life-of-the-World then hastened to bathe in the Krishnā and wearing His wet clothes applied the *gopichandana* clay to his forehead 52 Although He had assumed the form of a Brahman, still the sixfold brilliancy of His glory did not cease For the sake of His *bhakta* He was not at all ashamed of this act. 53 He who is the father of Brahmadeva, He who is unaffected by the three *gunas* He who is unaffected by *Māyā*, He, because of His love for His *bhakta* assumes a visible form 54 Rāmdas arranged some *palasa* leaves as plates, and placed his leaf-cakes on them He then made the offering ceremony He said O merciful, Life-of-the-World 55 Who art worshipped by the Blue-throated-one [Shiva], Who is the heart's jewel of the son of Anjani to Thee I offer this food this day' 56 Having thus made the offering ceremony, and offerings to the vital airs, the Husband-of-Rukmini ate the dry leaf cakes greedily, with delight 57 The Dweller in Heaven, Who was invited by Indra to drink nectar, would not go to him yet He asked for this humble food from His *bhakta*. 58 Rhishikeshi (Krishna) said to Rāmdās 'I have been fasting for many days Unexpected-

ly I have had to-day this feast in the forest in company with you' 59 Talking in this way the Life-of the-World ate to His satisfaction, and Rāmdās with much pleasure gave Him the *tulsi* leaves for cleansing his mouth 60 Then sitting quietly on the grass, Ramdas asked the Brahman 'Svāmī, where do you live? Where have you come from to-day? 61. To what place are you going? Tell me your name" To these questions of Ramdas the Husband-of-Rukmini replied 62 'Together with my wife I have been living many days at Pandharī Begging is my profession *I go seeking for patrons 63 In the month of* Kartika I went to Alandī on a pilgrimage Then Tukarama very kindly took me to Dehu 64 He also is one of my patrons He is ust like you, indifferent to worldly things, who has discarded his domestic life, and all wrong desires and wanders about in the forest 65 And now it is the festival season of Āshadhī and the eleventh of the fortnight is near My patrons all come there so I must go at once to Pandharī 66 You have asked me the name of this bodily frame Every where people call me Vitthalabhata 67 I have a desire that you should come along with me to Pandhari I will take you carefully, and together we shall enjoy ourselves 68 It has been my characteristic from the very beginning to enjoy the company of saints, so take the path to Pandhari. I am telling you the desire of my heart 69 To these words of the Life of the World Ramdas replied I am fond of the Lord of Ayodhya [Rama] He has entered into my heart 70 I do not like to contemplate other deities aside from Rama with the bow in His hand, and His beautiful pleasing form 71 Wherever He is, there I am willing to go prostrating myself To this remark of Ramdas Chakrapani (Krishna) replied 72 The image of Panduranga is at Pandhari but the image of Maruti is in front of Him He will cause you to meet Rama Have no doubt of that 73 After those remarks of Vitthalabhata Ramdas

felt a sudden desire He arose immediately, and started on the path to Pandharl. 74 Dattu, the barber walked near him He was given the begging bag to carry. God and His bhakta walked gaily along 75 (As they went along) Samartha and Dattu went into the towns to beg They baked the cakes on leaves and all three ate very happily together 76 It was the month of Āshādha, the rainy season Ramdās walked barefooted Every once in a while his feet were pierced by thorns He, however, did not feel them as he was in a condition of bodily unconsciousness. 77 But Vitthalabhata at once noticed them, and pulled them out Thus the merciful Husband of-Rukmini cared for His *bhakta* 78 Just as a mother looks moment by moment at her ignorant child, just so, God cared for His *bhakta* 79 As they descended towards Pandhari they saw the domes from afar It made Ramdās compose an *abhanga*, to which give ear, you pious folk

(*Abhanga* not translated)

RĀMDĀS' EXPERIENCES IN PANDHARI

80 There were an innumerable number of pilgrims singing hymns of praise as they walked along Musical instruments and banners abounded and all were shouting Victory, Victory to God' 81 The pilgrims made *namaskāras* to one another, and saluted one another They did not take recognition of differences of caste or personalities All pride had vanished. 82 Whether they were looking at animate or inanimate things they wished their minds to realize that God was in all And so no one had any pride of caste, and fell at the feet of any saint 83 Seeing these things, Rāmdās' mind was puzzled. He thought 'I have seen very many sacred places in my wanderings, but I never found a place where pride of heart had disappeared 84 But here men and women

seem without pride Pandharī is filled with the loud repetitions of God's names" In company with the Brahman, Rāmdās now approached the great door of the temple 85 Vitthalabhata now said to Rāmdās "I must go to see a patron" And with these words the Life-of the-World became invisible 86 Dattu said to Rāmdās "What has become of Vitthalabhata? What is his place? Where does he belong? We are unable to realize this" 87 Samartha perplexed in his mind replied "He was the Lord of-Pandharī It looks to me that He cast over me the spell of a Vaishnava *māyā*, and surely deceived me 88 The Lord-of-Pandharī in the form of a Brahman, brought me hither, caring for me in the way He is the Protector-of-the-helpless therefore, He pulled out the thorns from my feet with His own hands' 89 Thus conversing, they arrived at the Eagle platform Here a *kirtana* was being enthusiastically performed, accompanied with loud repetitions of God's names uttered with feelings of love 90 As Ramdas listened, he could not restrain his feelings and there and then composed two *abhangas*, to which I ask you to listen

(*Abhangas* not translated)

91 After Ramdas had repeated these verses, he made a *namaskara* to all the saints Just then he saw before him the image of Maruti, and his heart was filled with joy 92 He bowed before him on the ground, and with sincere feelings worshipped the Son of the-Wind [Māruti] Rāmdas stood before Him with his hands joined palm to palm and asked Where is our Rama?' 93 Then Maruti related to Ramdas the story of long ago How Rama killed the Lord of Lanka (Ceylon), and freed the good Sita 94 How He gave immortality to Bibhishana and installed him over Lankā (Ceylon), and how accompanied with His army of monkeys He returned

to Ayodhya 95 How the Lord of Ayodhyā became a universal ruler over the earth limited only by the seas How in His kingdom there was no such thing as old age death or poverty 96 Mankind abandoned hatred and evil thinking and lived in the fulness of joy The very name of falsehood could not be found even if needed for medicinal purposes 97 Shri Rama ruled for eleven thousand years Then sitting in His chariot of light [vimāna] He left Ayodhya for Heaven 98 I then pleaded with Rama 'Although Thou hast given me an immortal body, I cannot endure to live without seeing Thee 99 Thou art leaving me, O God, and going to Thy own abode How can I bear this ? O Thou Dark-as-a-Cloud O Thou Being of Supreme-Goodness 100 Then I further pleaded that He should give me a visible manifestation of Himself To this Rāma replied to me in His kind way 101 Hearing my plea He gave me this promise When you contemplate Me three times a day, I Rama will manifest Myself in your heart 102 In the *avatāra* Krishna I shall meet you in a visible manifestation' With this promise the Lord-of-Ayodhyā left for Heaven 103 I then sat *on the shore of the ocean, and thrice a day contemplated* Rama In my mental worship I contemplated the Enemy-of Rāvana [Rāma] 104 When it was near the close of the Dvāpāra Yuga, the Son of Brahma approached me I asked him when I would meet Rama ? 105 Nārada replied 'By the time you visit all the sacred watering places on the earth Rama will meet you 106 For this reason I have been wandering about with the desire in my heart of meeting with Rāma. After I had visited many shrines and sacred places, I finally came to Dvārakā. 107 Here I saw a city of gold whose domes kissed the skies It was like Lanka (Ceylon) ruled over by Bibhishana. Seeing the city, I was angry 108 I intended to lift it up with my tail and throw it into the sea Just then the

Muni Nārada appeared on the scene 109 I asked him the name of the city Nārada replied truly that it was the city of Dvarakā 110 That its king was the great Balarāma who was the *avatāra* of the Serpent Shesha Replying thus much to me the son of Brahmadeva [Narada] left 111 He at once informed Krishna that Maruti the *bhakta* of Rama had come to visit him 112 Narada and Krishna were really one, there being no difference between them in their feelings, but they had taken two different forms in order to fully carry on the lives (they were to live) 113 When Nārada told me that Balarama was king of the city, my heart was filled with anger, and I went into the city park. 114 There were here many kinds of trees bearing beautiful fruits and flowers They were tall and pierced the sky, just like the trees in the Nandana forest 115 I then enacted here the tricks of monkeys I ate my belly full of fruit I broke down great trees which made the forest keepers weep 116 On the throne were seated Shri Krishna, Balarama and Ugrasena and around them five hundred and sixty million Yadavas were standing So crowded was the assembly 117 The forest keepers cried out before the assembly that a monstrous monkey had come, and was destroying the park and had sent by them this message 118 That Balarama the king should either give up his title or bring up at once all his army to fight 119 When the assembly heard this news Narada clapped his hands And Krishna turning to Balarama laughed 120 The Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna] then said to his eagle 'Do at once what I am to tell you A monkey has come into the park Capture him and bring him here' 121 The eagle with his heart full of pride replied 'Do you send me to conquer a monkey? I once conquered you, Shri Hari Perhaps you have forgotten that 122 The Lord-of-Dvaraka replied 'My *bhaktas* are more powerful than myself They have already confined me in their

hearts and among them this monkey is a great *bhakta* of God. 123 So that aside from you, there is no one able to conquer him" To this remark of the Recliner-on-Shesha [Krishna] the eagle responded by taking flight

124 Knowing that the eagle had come, I sat with closed eyes I contemplated Rāma in my heart, and said not a word to him 125 The Eagle said to me 'Get up you monkey, and come quickly along with me Balarāma and Shri Krishna have called you' 126 Still I said nothing He came nearer to me, and struck me with his claws. I slapped him in his face, so that he fell in a faint. 127 After regaining consciousness he returned, and fell down in the midst of the Yadava assembly Shri Krishna came to him and gave him some water to drink. 128 Krishna said to him 'You had great confidence in yourself Has the monkey beaten you? The Eagle replied "He is in reality *God Rudra at the time of deluge*, and appears as big as a mountain' 129 Narada then said to Balarama "Change your name for another I know that that monkey is all powerful Neither gods nor demons can outdo him' 130 Krishna then said to Pradyumna 'Take with you the Yādava army bind the monkey and bring him here.' 131 At the command of the Life of the World the Yadava army made themselves ready All then went to the park, and engaged in defiant acts 132 Maruti now said to Rāmdās "The Lord of Ayodhyā [Rāma] told me while contemplating Him 'Do that which will destroy their pride' 133 Having received this command, I remained perfectly silent The Yādavas said to me 'Wake up, you monkey 134 You have destroyed the trees of the park and so Balarāma and Krishna are very angry Bring to your mind any one who can now protect you' 135. Then some said 'What can one monkey alone do before many?' So saying they marched towards me and looked

at me with curiosity from before and behind 136 One tickled me from behind One threw pebbles at me from a distance Some said among themselves 'Is he dead or alive?' 137 I listened to all they said, then I gave a command to my tail and then before they knew it at all I bound them all 138 By Shri Rāma's command my tail flew up into the air, and the Yadavas hung from it like so many bats. 139 I swayed my tail in the air like the swaying of a kite Men and women in Dvarakā saw the sight, and there was a great outcry of distress 140 There were some strong swimmers among those hanging to my tail They jumped into the sea I then dipped my tail in the water and gave them all a bath 141 As the water rushed into their ears and mouths all were intensely frightened. Just then some one went and told Krishna that the monkey had drowned the whole army of the Yādavas. 142 Nārada laughed and clapped his hands and said to Shri Krishna 'You will have to change your name The Monkey has drowned millions of Yadavas The Monkey is always supreme 143 Balarāma remarked 'The end has come' Ugrasena and Krishna were troubled Krishna then called the Eagle and said to him 144 'That is not a monkey, but Māruti, a worshipper and *bhakta* of Rama Go, therefore, tactfully, and bring him here 145. The Eagle replied 'Take your disk in your hand and go yourself and kill him O God, why do you put any one else in peril?' 146 The Father of-Brahmadeva [Krishna] then said 'I will take the form of Rama You then have nothing to fear You have but to say 'I will bring about your meeting with Rama. 147 Hearing this assuring remark, he started at once, and going into the park called out from a distance 148 'He who is the Universal Ruler, Lord of Ayodhyā Shri Rama the son of Dasharatha, summons Māruti at once to come and meet him' 149 Hearing this message, I felt very happy, and I at once let the

Yādavas go, whom I had bound by my tail 150 I went to the Eagle and made him a *namaskāra* I took him by the hand, and made him walk, telling him to bring me to Rama. 151 The Eagle was troubled for he said to himself 'Perhaps Krishna has not yet taken the form of Rāma If he has not, Māruti will kill me Things do not look favourable' 152 But seeing the love of his *bhakta*, Shrī Krishna became Rama. He looked adorable with his bow and arrow Balarāma became Lakshmana. 153 By Narada a message was sent to Satyabhāmā 'Shri Krishna has invited you to come He has become the Dweller-in-Ayodhyā [Rāma] Change yourself at once into Sitā 154 She adorned herself quickly, and came to Krishna. Krishna laughing said to her 'You are not really Sita 155 Satyabhāma felt ashamed but Krishna, the Killer of-Kansa said 'All the sixteen thousand chief wives including yourself go, and fetch Rukmini quickly here 156 At the command they went to where Rukmini was and bowed to her, and seeing that she had as beautiful a form as that of Sita they were wonderstruck. 157 As soon as Rukmini heard the message, she came and sat on the lap of Rāma. Around were a multitude of monkeys, and also Shatrughna and Bharata created by Krishna 158 While Krishna was manifesting these wonderful changes, I arrived without delay. I bowed to Rama and lovingly embraced Him 159 I stood before Him with hands joined together palm to palm Rama spoke in his sweet nectar voice 'Has your longing now been fulfilled? 160 I had said to you that during the *avatāra* of Krishna, I would give you a direct visual manifestation of myself That revelation you now have 161 Under the names of Rāma and Krishna I have manifested myself in two *avatāras* But we are essentially one We are not to be considered as separate beings' 162 With this remark the Husband of-Sitā [Rāma] took again the

form of Krishna. From that time I lovingly worship Rāma-Krishna'

163. The above story of events, when Krishna was the *avatāra*, was told by Māruti to Ramdās Rāmdas was astonished, and said to himself "I will test this assertion myself" 164 So having made a loving *namaskāra* to Maruti, Ramdās went into the assembly hall He stood before the image, but it was still the image of Panduranga. 165 Samartha stood with hands joined together palm to palm and with his lips he pleaded I quote his *abhangas* here in this chapter Listen to them with love.

(*Abhangas* not translated)

166 At the pleading words of Rāmdās, the Cloud-of-Mercy was deeply moved for he adapts himself to the feelings his *bhaktas* have towards him 167 Then by using the Vaishnava *māyā* he showed Rāmdas a wonderful sight. He showed him the whole view of Ayodhyā in a moment's time 168 The Chandrabhaga flowed in front of Rāmdās, but it looked like the Sharayu Ganga. Rāmdas' intense love bewitched Pānduranga 169 He had removed His hands from His side and taken in them a bow and arrow Around him Vaishnava cowherds sang who seemed monkeys to Ramdās 170 Through the feelings of *bhakti* Rukmini became Sitā And when Ramdas saw Rāma, he was joyful in heart 171 Just as a mother takes up her infant the moment she sees it Just so the Merciful to-the lowly embraced the God loving Ramdas 172 Where God and His *bhakta* meet together, there can never be separation But in order that there may be historical events, the Ruler of the Universe creates separate beings 173 He thought to Himself "If my *bhakta* is absorbed into my essence then who will there be to plead with me? Who will sing aloud my praises?" He then said to Ramdas · 174 "Go to

the Eagle platform, where the saints and *mahantas* are seated, and perform a *kirtana* there'

175 In the next chapter there will be a pleasing story which will satisfy the ear's longings So let the hearers give close attention. 176 While then Rāmdās is lovingly performing his *kirtana* on the river sand, do you with close attention listen to Mahipati 177. Svasti This book, the Santavijaya, by the mere listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled Listen, you, God loving pious *bhaktas* This is the ninth deligtful chapter

---

CHAPTER X.

THE EVIL KALI YUGA [Evil age]

1 In this Kali Yuga the speaking of untruths has greatly increased. For that reason God assumed the Buddha *avatāra*. 2 The holy, long lived *rishis* went off to Badrikāshrama. The *sanyāsis* that remained have been troubled by lust and anger 3 Brahmans that study the Vedas are hindered by the snare of their desires Even when their aged bodies become mere skeletons still they cannot detach themselves from worldly affairs. 4 The wise are but literate fools The aged have no reason. Mankind is sunken in the sea of worldly affairs and cannot escape the pains of rebirths 5 The Lord-of-Pandhari had aroused in him the merciful thought of saving mankind He then made His Name a ferry boat, and has stood ready to ferry across the sea of this worldly life

RĀMDĀS MEETS MANY SAINTS

6 In the last extraordinary chapter the Lord of-Pandhari seeing Ramdas feelings for one form, revealed Himself to him in the form of Rāma 7 Rāmdās then composed verses describing the form he saw I quote them in this chapter Listen attentively to them

(Verses not translated)

8 This was Ramdas description of the form of Rāma as he saw it *Bhaktas* who see that form with its qualities, their eyes feel a sense of peace. 9 This Pandharapura, which is without a beginning had the appearance to him of Ayodhya The cowherds became monkeys and danced, making their monkey cries 10 Rukmini,

the primal *māyā*, became Jānakī [wife of Rāma]. Thus the *Life-of-the-World* [Krishna] fully carried out the wish of His servant. 11. The Chandrabhāgā, *flowing* southward seemed to the eye as the Sharayū Gangā. The Vaishnavas seeing this, marvelled, for, it was a very extraordinary fact. 12. The God-loving *bhaktas* saw with their own eyes the deeds performed by the *avatāra* Shrī Rāma. Those to whom Rāma manifested Himself, they had a direct vision of Him. 13. Those who Yuga after Yuga become *avatāras*, along with God, they were full of joy at meeting the Husband-of-Sītā [Rāma].

14. You may ask who they were. Listen to their names. And if you listen to the record of their deeds, the Husband-of-Rukminī [Krishna] will be pleased. 15. Nimbarāja Bāvā of Daithana, the noble Vaishnava Tukārāma, the supreme *bhakta* Mānakoji Bodhalā, worthy of the highest praise 16 Vāmana Svāmī, the clever Pandita, of loving disposition, and free from all hatred. He made a Marāthī version of the tenth skandha of the Bhāgavata. 17. Jayarāma Gosāvī of Vadagāva, who was a great *bhakta* and worshipper of Krishna. The Husband-of-Rukminī, seeing his determination met him in a visible form. 18. There was also Shekh Muhammad of Chāmbhāragonde, a great *bhakta*, a man of *bhakti*, knowledge, and indifference to worldly things, who expressed his thoughts in poetry. 19 Ranganātha Svāmī, and his brother Atyā, both of whom lived at Nigadi, singing or listening to his verses produces a sense of repentance. 20. These saints, God-loving and wise, to whom Krishna was subservient, through Rāmdās saw Rāma before their eyes. 21. They ..: "We had never seen with our eyes the deeds of the *avatāra* Rāma. Our heart's longings have been satisfied to day. Rāmdās has fulfilled our wish" 22. The others of the pilgrims saw Pandharī just as it always was, but to

the saints it seemed to be Ayodhyā. This seems very strange 23 To the eyes of the ordinary people Pānduranga was seen sitting on His throne, but to the saints He seemed Rāma This is very strange 24 The ignorant and those with worldly minds saw the Bhimā, but the saints, however, bathed in the Sharayu Gangā. That seems also very strange 25 The cowherds were gaily dancing This is what the pilgrims saw, but the saints saw them as monkeys swarming around Pandhari 26 As all the saints saw the deeds connected with Rāma, they thought on the matter, and then besought Rāmdās that he should make God appear as before 27 They said 'Panduranga, the dark complexioned one became Himself Rāma voluntarily for him [Ramdas] seeing his loving worship, and unerring devotion. 28 Just as a crystal assumes the colour of the thing on which it is placed so Shriranga (God) yields to the wishes of His *bhaktas* 29 Or just as Māruti went on a pilgrimage to Dvarka during the *avatara* ship of Krishna and Shri Krishna became Rama just such an event has now occurred 30 We however, love the object of our contemplation to be as before, His beautiful form on the brick, and His two hands gracefully on His hips and His eyes directed to the tip of his nose 31 When God saw the supreme devotion of Pundalika He gave him a promise He became the *avatara* Panduranga But (with Kirshna as Rama) the Pundalika story becomes of no value 32 Even the crazy Rāmdās seems like a monkey He has changed the image of Panduranga and made Him appear as Rāma with His bow and arrow 33 Another remarked "Why blame Ramdas? If our God of universal power did not become Rama then what sort of a doer would He be? 34 This Life of the World the voluntary Actor is under the authority of His *bhakta* so that He becomes for Him what he wishes, according to the depth of his feeling 35. There was once in this sacred city a *bhakta* of Shiva s by

na ne of Narhari the Goldsmith. For his sake the Husband of Rukminī [Krishna] wore the Shiva emblem on His head 36 Vithobā is fond of the *bhakta* who worships God wholly and solely The Soul-of-the-Universe therefore assumes that form that pleases His *bhaktas* '

37 Making the above statement all the saints pleaded with Rāmdas "God has fulfilled the desire of your heart 38 Through you we have had a sight of Rama Thereby our longings have been satisfied and the sight of Him has cooled our eyes 39 So now pray to the Husband-of Sītā and change this sacred city into what it was before As the saints thus spoke Ramdās began to plead with God 40 So Rāmdās prayed O Dweller in-Ayodhyā Husband of-Sīta hear my prayer O Life-of the-World show us Thyself as Thou wast before 41 Knowing Pundalika s wish Thou didst become the *avatara* Pandurangа Thy feet parallel on the brick, and Thy hands on Thy hips 42 All the saints are most anxious to see Thee in that form and I also have the same desire aroused in me So now O God become as Thou wast formerly 43 As Rāmdās was thus praying all saw the image as now that of Pandurangа The saints seeing this were astonished They then embraced his feet

44 After that event the saints often met with Rāmdās remarking In him Maruti has appeared as an *avatāra* for the salvation of the world 45 Seeing his unlimited worship and loving *bhakti* Pandurangа became Rāma and manifested the deeds performed in His former *avatāra* 46 After making the observations the noble Vaishnavas took Ramdas by the hand circumambulated the holy city, singing aloud as they walked 47 There was the loud sound of cymbals *vinās* and drums There was a great flow of sound. The servants of Hari shouting His name

danced with joyous enthusiasm. 48. Some fastened small bells to their feet, and danced here and there. There was clapping of the hands and snapping of fingers. As they listened, people lost bodily consciousness. 49. Some sang of the deeds of the saints. Others listened with love and reverence. Some, filled with love, walked about singing aloud the names of God 50. Seeing such gladness about him, Rāmdās was very happy, and exclaimed: "Blessed, Blessed art Thou, O God Supreme, that Thou shouldst create in this universe a sacred city like this one. 51. I have seen many sacred places, but pride seemed to increase there. But here, in looking at the Chandrabhāgā, men become free of pride." 52. In saying these words, Rāmdās' love overflowed. His eyes filled with the tears of joy. All the saints saw him. 53. In circumambulating the sacred city they danced wildly. They leaped under the influence of love and joy If one had a crooked intention it did not remain. 54. The saints, *sādhus* and the pilgrims wondered at the sight. They said to themselves: "He is truly an *avatāra* in visible form, and not a mere man." 55. With such feelings of joy the city was circumambulated. Then coming before the shrine of Pundalika, they sang songs of praise 56. All shouted "Victory, Victory," in the name of Vitthala, and the saints, *sādhus* and the noble Vaishnavas all met together on the river sand bed 57. Rāmdās then said to all the saints: "Go now and listen to the *Kīrtana*. Immediately *Kathās* (*Kīrtanas*) had commenced in several places on the sand bed, and in them the Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna] was sincerely praised." 58. The Haridāsa in many songs, and in many forms, are singing to Krishna. Lovers of music are feeling their hearts full of joy. 59. The simple minded Vaishnavas are singing with love. The Husband-of-Rukmini has become bewitched

by it, and has forgotten that He is God 60 God has forgotten that He is God, and the self consciousness of His *bhaktas* has disappeared, but love remains everlasting as the wise know from experience" 61 An innumerable number of pilgrims gathered to listen to the *kirtana* given by Tukārāma Svāmī of Dehū, the avatara of Namadeva. 62 Ramdās, seeing the gathering, also sat down there to listen. All the listeners lost bodily consciousness No one was conscious of possessing a body 63 There was the sound of the cymbal, *vinā* and the drum There was a great flow of sound. The Haridāsa sang with the enthusiasm of love. There was no limit to their joy 64 He so spoke that all, from child to adult, women, Shudras and other castes could understand his blessed words 65 While Tukārāma

(*Abhangas* of Tukārāma not translated)

was repeating his *abhangas* Ramdās was wagging his head, and remarking Many people, listening to his talk, will obtain some direct manifestation of God." 66. Thus remarking to himself Samartha sat quietly by, and for three watches of the night listened to the loud music of the *kirtana* 67 When one watch of the night only remained, the hymns of praise were sung, the wave offering over the Husband-of-Rukmini was performed, and sweetmeats were distributed 68. The saints embraced one another, and then sat quietly remarking that they wished to listen to Rāmdās' *kirtana*, being filled with the love of God

RĀMDĀS PERFORMS A KIRTANA

69 On the next day at the eagle platform preparations were made A dense crowd assembled at the great door of the temple shouting aloud the names of God with cries of "Victory, Victory" 70 The *bhakta* Nimbarāja, Bodhalā, the world-wide known Tukārāma, the God loving

bhakta Jayarāma Gosāvī, hastened to sit down to listen (to Ramdas' *kirtana*) 71. Shekh Muhammad, an ocean of knowledge, Rangasvāmī Nigadikara, and many other noble Vaishnavas also sat down to listen with reverence. 72 The assembly of pilgrims made a dense crowd, so that one could see no path through them The news spread through the sacred city, and the most prominent Brahmans came to listen. 73 Among them was Vāmana Svāmī, the wise Pandita, very learned in the *vedas* and *shās'ras*, besides being a God loving *bhakta* he was widely known for his poetic talent 74 Thus all the chief *bhaktas*, young and old, sat down to listen The drums and the *vinās* played in harmony, and Rama was adored 75 Then at the name of Vitthala, there were shouts of 'Victory Victory," and the clapping of hands It was such as would make Krishna happy The sound overflowed the sky 76 *Ramdās* repeating to himself the names of the Dweller-in Ayodhya, the Husband of Sita [Rama] the diety worshipped by Shiva then began his *kirtana* 77 He repeated some inspiring *abhangas* of his own composition They are written in books Listen, all you pious people

(*Abhangas* not translated)

78 Ramdās showed a mind of vast capacity His poetry was full of blessed inspiration His oratroy was like that of Brihaspati [Jupiter] and yet he had no pride of greatness 79 And so he pleaded with the saints, saying 'What shall I say before you? I do not know how to sing I have no skill or cleverness 80 From childhood I have wandered in forests I have not committed poetry to memory I have no philosophic knowledge 81 My speech has no sweetness I have no knowledge of the laws of right and wrong, nor of right thinking I have not studied the teaching of the *vedas* All of you saints know this 82 In music I have no knowledge of time or

harmony In every way I am deficient, and of a humble estate Rāma is witness to this "

83 Rāmdās spoke as above but the saints replied to him "The Lord-of Ayodhya the Husband of Sitā is your helper 84. Without His favour all skill lacks brilliancy It is like the breast-like growth on the neck of a goat. An infant sucking it will get no milk. 85 If one is able to obtain nectar why try to collect common herbs? Why does one need the light of a lamp when the sun has arisen? 86 It was because of your wish that the image of Pāndu ranga changed to one holding a bow and arrow [Rāma] All the saints saw this change 87 You are the *avatāra* of Maruti come to save the world So now with loving devotion sing to the praise of Pānduranga " 88 Thus requested by all the saints Ramdas heart was full of joy He then repeated an *abhanga* which you hearers must listen to with reverence

(*Abhangas* not translated)

89 Rāmdās in this way praised especially the greatness of *bhakti*, and that the name of God was a Saviour, able to save the most ignorant of men. 90 There was Ajamila, the Brahman who lost his heart to a low caste woman. As he was dying the angels of Yama hastened to carry him away 91 But just as he came to his last breath he called out to his son Nārāyana That name burned up his fault and the angels of Yama fled away 92 The angels of Vishnu seated him in a chariot-of light, and carried him to heaven. Thus in the Purānas the goodness of the merciful Krishna is proclaimed 93 Then there was the prostitute [Pingalā] who was just a heap of sins She was at the point of death She had no relatives near her, for all had abandoned her 94 There was a parrot in a cage and her attention was called to it She exclaimed to it O Rāghobā [Parrot and also Rāma] I am about to die I an

all in a tremor. 95. O Rāghobā, who now will give you food and water? My eyes see no one who will open the cage and let you go free. 96. O Rāghobā, I am your enemy, an enmity that was formed in a former birth. It is because of that that I have confined you in a cage." 97. As she took Rāghobā's name [Rāma's] her sins were burned up. The angels of Yama fled, for they had no strength to resist the angels of Vishnu. 98. The servants of Vishnu quickly came, and seated her in the chariot-of-light and brought her to the land of Heaven. This story is known all over the world.

99. Then there is the story of the man, of Brahman blood, whose occupation was that of killing. His name was Vālā Koli, and he was known everywhere. 100. He killed innumerable living beings. The earth trembles at the mention of his sins. Penance cast him away, as unable to purify him. 101. Even the great sacred watering places were afraid of him. They exclaimed: "We do not want his touch, such an evil murderer as he is." Nārada saw him. 102. And said to him: "You kill many beings, and thereby support your large family. Who is responsible for such sins? Think of that, you who are blind from pride." 103. Hearing Nārada's words, he, secretly hastened to his home. He called all, young and old, together, and said to them: 104. "I kill travellers, and thereby provide you with food and clothing. Tell me whether you will continue as partners with me in these crimes?" 105. His relatives replied: "Suffer the effects of your own sins for ever." Hearing this, the bad man naturally felt angry. 106. With his heart easily angered he exclaimed: "You have eaten thus far of my doings, and now you have turned against me. I will take revenge on you today." He told this secretly to Nārada. 107. Nārada heard him and said: "We are only two, and they are many. We are unabe to defeat them in quarrel. Do

what I now tell you 108 During all your life you have cared for and supported your family and yet they are not willing to share the crimes with you So repeat the words Rāma, Rama, and kill them by a curse 109 Vālya, easily aroused to anger exclaimed as a curse You have eaten what I provided, and now you have turned against me So let all of you die today I am very angry ' 110 He said to Narada ' Well are they all dead now ? ' The heavenly rishi [Narada] was astonished and said to himself He has no common sense 111 Curses and blessings given by the good are fulfilled, but there is no numbering of his sins Penance has cast him off 112 Nārada then said to him Repeat the words mara marā [die, die] I will go and see whether they have been destroyed and will hasten back to tell you 113 Saying thus much to that murderer Narada went back to heaven And Vālā got into the habit of repeating all the time the words Marā mara. 114 *Sadhus* give advice according to the capacity of the people So in telling Vālyā to repeat the words 'Marā mara it naturally led to his repeating the words Rama Rāma 115 The power of God s name is great It burned up all his sins and Valmiki was lost in contemplation and all enmity was forgotten. 116 White ants ate up his body and trees grew on it He was a mere skeleton of bones but did not die 117 So from the place where Vālmiki sat in the forest the sound of Rāma s name was to be heard. Twelve years passed in this manner 118 In the mean time the *sadguru* Nārada one day remembered the past event and came to the forest to look for Valmiki 119 As he looked everything birds trees and stones seemed to have the form of Rama through his worship The *sadguru* then saw the spot where Valmiki had been sitting 120 Here he saw a skeleton but from within the skeleton there came out the sound of Rāma, Rāma He whose look is of mercy [Nārada] looked at it,

and passed his hands over it 121 Through the *sadguru's* favor his body became a divine body Vālmīki, filled with love, placed his head on Nārad's feet. 122 Nārada said to him "Describe the qualities and history of him whom you have been contemplating There is no better occupation for you than that 123 Vālmīki bowed assent to this command of Narada's and composed a book of one billion verses The Lord of-Kailāsa [Shiva] distributed them throughout the Three worlds 124 Ninetynine million were divided in three parts, namely, of thirty three million each It was given to the three worlds by the five faced Shiva 125 Of the ten million that remained there were three divisions made Thirtythree hundred thousand were distributed by Shiva 126 Of the hundred thousand that remained ninetynine thousand were divided into three parts and were divided amongst the three a most remarkable thing 127 Finally a thousand *shlokas* remained Three hundred each were given to the three worlds There now remained but one hundred *shlokas* They also were thoughtfully distributed. 128 Thirtythree *shlokas* were equally distributed in three parts In this distribution one *shloka* remained 129 There were thirty two syllables in it Each of the Three worlds received ten each Finally there remained two syllables which were especially pleasing to Shiva 130 The chief serpent of the lower regions the eightyeight thousand great rishis and the thirtythree million gods, and Indra sat down together 131 Shiva said to them I have distributed all the verses, blessed is that Muni Valmiki He has created a boat to save men 132 Those who may sit in it have no need of fear of the ocean of this earthly life They will reach the other side dry, without so much as wetting their hands or feet. 133 Now I am going to ask something good of you There are two syllables left They cannot be equally divided, so I ask you to give them to me 134 The gods were all as-

tonished by this request of the Husband-of Pārvati They exclaimed 'This simple minded Shiva does not betray the least selfishness' 135 But those who were wise among them understood that Shiva was not so very simple minded. He really took the cream of the whole book The ignorant do not understand the inner secrets of things 136 So when the Husband of Umā [Shiva] drank the poison and his whole body was aflame with pain, he shouted out those two syllables which he had carefully preserved 137 In saying "Rama, Rāma,' the burning pain ceased Such was the story of Vālmiki that Ramdas related in his *Kirtana* 138 There is, therefore, no *mantra* greater than that of the name of Rāma By that name Shiva ceased to feel the heat of the poison and thus He showed the way to *bhaktas* 139 In order to take men safely over the sea of this existence he has created boats consisting of one thousand names. Pāndu ranga, the friend of his *bhaktas* is a ferry boat to carry his people to the other side 140 In my book I am quoting Rāmdās' words just about this Hearers who listen have the snares of this worldly existence cut away

141 After Ramdas ended his discourse there were shouts of Victory Victory by the noble Vaishnavas, and the calling aloud of the name of Vitthala 142 Then came the lighting of lights the final singing of sweet praise, and Husband-of Rukmini was waved over with lights Then facing the image of Pāndurangа they all made him *namskāra* 143 Pandharinātha, the Merciful-one-to-the-lowly, will cause me to continue the story of Rāmdās. Mahipati is merely his stamp He speaks what he is taught to speak.

144 Svasti This book is the Santavijaya By the mere listening to it, all the longings of the heart are ful-l Let the God loving wise *bhaktas* listen. This is the tenth delightful chapter

CHAPTER XI.

INVOCATION TO PĀNDURANGA

1 Victory to Thee Pānduranga, Lover of-Thy-*bhaktas*. Thou pervadest the universe, but art separate from it By contemplation alone Thou breakest the bonds binding one to this worldly existence, O Delight-of-Rukmini, Shri Vitthala 2 In Thy form, as the Universe, and infinite, Thy limits are unknown by the *Vedas* and *Shāstras* Around Thee revolve the moon, sun, and all the host of stars 3 The serpent Shesha [on which Vishnu reclines] praises Thee with its one-thousand mouths Yet even he cannot comprehend Thy exact limit, although in the attempt he had his tongues cut in two 4 Yamadharma, Varuna and Kubera constantly contemplate Thee with reverence. Parvati and Shiva repeat Thy names with extreme reverence 5 Thou art just such and such has as yet not been determined Thou art the servant of Thy servant, standing truly by his side 6 Thy two hands are placed on Thy hips and Thy sight is directed to the tip of Thy nose [the image of Vitthala] Thou grantest a meeting with Thy pious *bhaktas*, and dost protect them in their distresses in this earthly existence

THE PILGRIMS DRAMATIZE THE STORIES OF KRISHNA

7 In the last chapter there was the lively story of Ramdas' extraordinary *kirtana*, which the Vaishnava *bhaktas* listened to with feelings of love, and were made happy thereby 8. The festival continued for seven days, and then when it was full moon they started the Gopalkalā [The stories dramatized] The crowd went to Venunada, and the chariot containing the image of Vitthala started on its way 9 There was the loud playing of sweet instruments

Groups of singers sang with sweet voices Symbals and drums made their loud sounds, and the noble Vaishnavas sang 10 The great crowd of pilgrims took the path to Gopālpurā, waving the seven colored banners and Eagle flags 11 The God loving *bhaktas* sang and danced They shouted the name of Vitthala The gods sitting in their chariots-of light looked down and exclaimed "Blessed is that world of mortals 12 The Pervader of the Universe has greatly deceived us in giving us the nectar of immortality He gave the nectar of love to the saints and there is no limit to their joy 13 Because of the devotion of Pundalika (to his parents) the Supreme Brahma wanders over these sands, meets with His pious people, and protects them from the distresses of this earthly life" 14 While the Gods were thus discoursing among themselves, the noble Vaishnavas were repeating aloud the names of God and soon reached Gopālpurā 15. They worshipped Pushpavati and then went to see Muralidhara [Krishna with his *venū*] There they prostrated themselves on the ground, and then began the *kirtana*

16 It was Nimbarāja who now led in the dramatic representation of the *Gopis* and Krishna. The saints stood behind him taking part in the play 17 The poem of Shri Ekanātha on philosophical themes founded on Krishna's childhood deeds was dramatized by Nimbarāja 18 Krishna was represented as eating dirt and when His mother Yashoda, chid Him, He showed her the whole universe in His mouth He also represented Krishna's holding up the mountain Govardhana to protect the cowherds and the cows 19 He represented how Krishna stole and drank the milk, and then showed to the cowherds His infinite qualities Also how, when He spilled the buttermilk, His mother tied Him to the stone in which rice is pounded. 20 Then Nimbarāja represented Krishna's mother Yashoda and

began to churn Jayarama took the part of Krishna, and ate the butter. 21 Tukarama took the part of Pendha, and said to Krishna, "Restrain the cow It is not good to be in your company I am going to put you out" 22 Then they represented in their acting the games played by Krishna when He was a child, such as the *hututu* and *humbali*, and songs were sung by the beating of duf and their hips 23 Ball and bat, *lapandūn*, and when Krishna played false, they sought to strike him saying "Krishna, it is our turn Give it to us quickly, you thief' 24 Vadajyā, and Vakada, in many ways, made faces at Krishna In seeing the acting of these deeds of Krishna, the audience all laughed 25 Some of the milkmaids went to bathe unclad in the Yamuna Krishna took away their clothes and climbed the *kalamba* tree 26 In their home language they pleaded with Krishna for their clotnes, but He made them come out holding their hands up and bowing to the sun 27. In this way the saints acted out the childhood deeds of Krishna and gave an exhibition of the games that He played with the cowherdesses 28 How they put aside all hatred How they did not so much as think of pride All played together The crowd of pilgrims watched all this acting 29 Acting the part of cowherdesses, some challenged others to solve their riddles with a philosophical meaning While Nimbaraja was acting in the play, Tukarama was repeating *abhangas* conveying the meaning of the riddles 30 While some were playing *phugadi* and *pingā* Tukarama was reciting inspiring *abhangas*, relating how the cowherds said to Krishna We are hungry 31 If you will give us a feast such as we want, then only shall we be satisfied ' Nimbaraja (acting as Krishna) mixed together popped rice and curds, and distributed them. 32 While the shouting of God s names was going on, the gods wanted some of the favors So they assumed the form of men, and with their hands picked up kernels of the popped rice

33 Mahipati begs of his hearers if they doubt the statement that the gods took human form, that they listen to the proof I give. 34 All pilgrims who come to Pandhari go also to Gopālpurā, so that there is the same crowded condition in the temples and bazars 35 The multitudes are beyond all count That the gods come there in human form has the authority of the assertions of the saints. I am not speaking this on my own authority 36 The Husband of Rukmini the Dweller on the-bank-of the Bhimā has commanded me to write and this Santavijaya is entirely according to His wish 37 Now going back to the statement that Nimbarāja distributed the curds and popped rice, and that gods took human form and picked up kernels of popped rice 38 The Gods ate them with pleasure They regarded nectar as inferior to this

Going further the saints visited Krishna [Muralidhara] and then, returned to Pandhari 39 The music sounded loud There were bands of singers and flags in profusion There were loud shouts of Vithala's name so that the very sky reverberated with the sound 40 The pilgrims passed naturally by the Padmatirtha, where Nimbaraja acted as a juggler All the hearers exclaimed This has been a happy day We have seen novel things.

41 As Rāmdās watched the doings of the festival he was very pleased. With his own eyes he had seen the deeds of Krishna when an *avatāra* as acted in this pageant. 42 The pilgrims walked around Pandhari keeping it to their right and arrived at their lodgings The saints among them went to the eagle platform and there danced shouting "Victory Victory." 43 When the way opened for them into the temple they saw there the Supreme Brahma on the brick They embraced Him with love and prostrated themselves at His feet. 44 Thus on the full moon day the saints drank the divine juice and at night

the colorful procession started and made the streets of Pandhari gay 45 Rockets, and various fire works were let off There was the loud sound of the musical instruments Actors and Haridāsa led the procession singing and the people threw perfumed powders into the air 46 Thus during the period of full moon the festival was celebrated by day and by night Then as the first day of the fortnight began there was the Kālā festival at the great door of the temple 47 The Haridāsa in the city, and the rulers of the city, came to the great door in a gay procession The crowd was intensely dense, heads touched heads and there were shouts of 'Victory Victory' in God's name 48 The saints along with the crowds of pilgrims circumambulated the Eagle and Maruti The people scattered curds milk and popped rice and these acting as cowherds danced over them 49 They suspended some great jars full of curds and then made holes in them so that the curds flowed out in a stream The cowherds drank it out of their hands

RĀMDĀS ASKS GOD'S LEAVE TO DEPART

50 Such was the celebration of the Gopalkala festival and the crowd now began to disperse Samartha being alone by himself thought as follows 51 I must privately take leave of God and hasten away Half the night had passed. The final hymns of praise were sung 52 The saints had gone to their lodgings The locks had been placed on the doors of the inner shrine The temple servants having to keep awake many nights were overpowered by sleep 53 Ramdās then came and looked at the image of Vitthala through holes in the door and said to Him I am going Keshava [Krishna] Let your love of me remain 54 God now performed a wonderful miracle The locks fell off the doors opened of themselves and the idol was plainly seen 55 His feet were parallel on the brick His two hands adorned His hips Around His waist

lung the yellow robe and a garland around His neck. It cooled the eyes to see Him 56 There were earrings in His ears His eyes were large [reaching to the ears] His sight was directed to the tip of his nose When Rāmdās saw this image of god, he embraced Him with love 57 He placed his head at the God's feet and said: "I am going back to my forest home You must give me leave to go" 58 Hearing him the Husband-of-Rukmini said: "When will you come again?" Rāmdās replied "Nothing is really in my hands 59 Thou Lord-of-the-World didst take the form of a Brahman and bring me here Thou with Thine own hand drew out the thorns in my feet That does not seem a right thing for Thee to have done 60 But through Thee, the Lord-of-the-World, I have met all the saints, and as I have watched the showers of joy, my heart is unable to contain so much happiness 61 Thou dost cause Thy-self to be called generous and patient, and so I ask of Thee one gift, and that is that Thou shouldest not forget me, just as a

(*Abhanga* not translated)

mother does not forget her infant child 62 Listening to Rāmdās' pleading words, Chakrapāni (Krishna) sobbed and exlaimed "I, the Giver-of Final Bliss am always with you, whether you are in the forests or among men" 63 As the Ruler-of the-World said this, Rāmdās embraced His feet, and then treasuring in his memory the form of the image, he immediately started to go 64 He took up his bag. Dattu was standing at the door and Samarth said to him:

RĀMDĀS' RETURN JOURNEY

"Come along with me now I have asked Pandharinātha's leave to go." 65 The two kept the sacred city of Pandhari to their right, and walked rapidly on their way As he walked along, he composed verses full of blessing 66.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

Thus happy in heart, the two journeyed quickly along, calling to their recollection the joys they experienced in Pandharī 67 All the animate and inanimate things Ramdās saw on the way seemed in the form of Rāma.

On the first day Ramdās arrived at Narasipura 68 At the junction of the Nīrā and Bhīma rivers, both the pilgrims bathed. They then went to pay their respects to God's image, and there bowed prostrate before Him 69 Samartha took his begging bag and at once went into the town He went through the alleys crying out 'Victory to Rāma', and then hurried along 70 He visited eleven houses, and then returned to the bank of the Bhīma Here he found that Dattu had just returned from collecting dry dung fuel 71 With his own hands he made a clean place, kindled the pile of dung fuel, performed his religious bath, and then baked the cakes on leaves, and the meal was now ready 72 Just then Krishna becoming a feeble Brahman approached Ramdas and said to him Suppose me to be God Narahari in visible form, as I am burning within with hunger 73 Ramdās said to the Brahman If you are willing to eat these cakes without sauce then sit down with us to the meal, and make me a lowly man, one possessing a protector' 74 He of the Eagle-banner replied 'I am fond of cakes made of bran But I think these cakes are better than those' 75 Thus saying, the Brahman bathed and then sat down before his plate The Soul-of the universe, because of His love for His servant, ate this coarse food 76 One God and two *bhaktas* sat down together to eat and ate until their hunger was satisfied Then the Husband of Lakshmī the Merciful one, said to Ramdas 77 You have satisfied my hunger, and you have the good forune of satisfying me, a Brahman, and God through me When tonight you perform a *kirtana* in the temple, I shall come to listen ' 78 Thus remarking, the Lord of the-universe, left quickly for His temple.

Rāmdās was very pleased, and exclaimed "My desire has been perfectly fulfilled"

79 Rāmdās, at the approach of night, went to the assembly hall in the temple and began his *kirtana* The citizens of the town came to listen, and listened with love as Rāmdās sang of the character and deeds of God. 80 The Brahmans listening to Rāmdās' perfect oratory were greatly amazed All exclaimed "Blessed, blessed In listening to him we have experienced a sense of peace" 81 God [Narahari] preserved Pralhāda. That was Rāmdās' theme The *kirtana* lasted until the third watch of the night, and then ended by the wave offering over the Husband-of-Lakshmi [Krishna] 82 The citizens whispered to one another "We must persuade him to remain over tomorrow" With this thought in mind all returned to their homes 83 Rāmdās understood what was in their minds, but at very early dawn he arose, and started on his way When it was morning the people came to see him, but there was no one to be seen there

84 Rāmdās walked along briskly, and in whatever town he lodged for the night, he performed a *kirtana*. 85 Journeying along in this way, he reached the forest of Māhuli.

KING SHIVĀJI AGAIN GREETS RĀMDĀS

Scouts came and told king Shivāji the news of Rāmdās return 86 The king was very glad, and at once started to visit him He brought with him all the materials needed for worship, and arrived at the place where he first met Rāmdās 87 He saw the *swāmi* from a distance. From there he walked towards him barefoot. He prostrated himself on the ground eleven times. 88 Samartha at once made him rise, and lovingly embraced him The king made Rāmdās sit on a mat, and then using the materials he had brought, worshipped him 89 Perfumes,

rice, garlands of flowers, incense, lights and offerings, circumambulation all were used, and then the king resting from these acts, 90 said 'Where was it you went to, leaving me for a whole month?' The swāmī replied "I went to Pandhari to pay my respects to Pānduranga [Krishna]" 91 The king continued "Why did you not, O Savior of the world, take me, a poor sinner, along with you?" Samartha replied 'Hurry back home, and break your fast 92 For a month you have fasted, eating only fruit It is because I understood your feelings that I have hastened back to meet you.' 93 Receiving this command of Ramdas, the noble king made him a *namaskāra* and hastened back to Sātara What happened afterwards I will now tell you

THE RULE OF AURANGZEB THE MUHAMMADAN KING

94 The king Aurangzeb Lord of Delhi, bringing his army and equipments invaded the southern countries, and conquered many great kings 95 He conquered six provinces in the Deccan and took their rule into his own hand He brought distress on cows and Brahmans He destroyed idols 96 But wherever he saw any miraculous deed he was ready to bow in reverence Elsewhere he used great oppression He gave the noble Brahmans great trouble

97 Now at Mahuli there was a Muhammadan Military post, which Aurangzeb had then recently established Now while Samartha was wandering through the forest a marvellous event took place 98 The chief of that military post had come (into forest) to practice shooting with bow and arrow While shooting at a target his arrows kept missing it 99 Seeing him shooting in that way, Ramdas at once approached him and said to the Muhammadan 'What kind of shooting do you call that? 100 As soon as you shoot an arrow go after it and catch it in its flight' The

Muhammadan replied · "That is impossible. Certainly for me 101 I will shoot the arrow, and you catch up with it in its flight and seize it " Samartha replied 'Very well," and stood behind the man 102 The Muhammadan then let go the bow string which he had drawn to his ear, and Rāmdās gave a leap and seized the arrow in its flight 103 In less time than it takes for eyelid to meet eyelid he had seized and brought back the arrow The Muhammadan was full of astonishment and exclaimed "This *fakir* is truly an *avatara* in human form." 104 Thus thinking to himself, he made Rāmdās a *namaskāra*. Samartha then took the bow in his own hand, and shot at the target 105 The Mogul was greatly astonished. Samartha then said to him "He who with one shot can shoot the farthest, he is the one to be called an expert." 106 Then seeing before him a great tree, he shot an arrow at it It passed entirely through the trunk The Muhammadan's heart now trembled with fear 107 Said he 'His seems an extrarordinary power This Hindu *fakir* could alone kill a thousand If he took it to his heart to do so, he could conquer the whole of this kingdom. 108 Thus thinking in his heart, the Muhammadan bowed to Rāmdās, exclaiming "Blessed is your power I see no one your equal in the whole universe 109 Samartha then replied to him ' There is no difference between you and me God [Caitanya] pervades every being To Him there is no such thing as mine and thine 110 You Muhammadans say that the formless Khudā [God] created the Muhammadans, and is it so written in your Kurāns that the Hindus originated from a thief? 111 Your belief is not correct It creates a continuous spirit of hatred You trouble God and Brahmans, and, therefore, your purpose is not accomplished" 112 He did not understand Rāmdās very well and so Rāmdās composed an *a'hanga* in the Muham-

madan language I gladly quote it in this chapter, let the saints listen to it in reverence.

(*Abhangas* not translated)

113. As Rāmdas used the Muhammadan language he made a prostrate bow to Ramdās, and all the soldiers that accompanied him, they also bowed prostrate on the ground 114 Then standing before Samartha he said 'I shall accept any command you may make me Let me know anything that may be in my power to give' 115 Samartha replied "While we have been practising the shooting with bow and arrow, we have trodden this farmer s field, and he must be very troubled thereby. 116 So at once make out a deed and give this land in perpetuity to this man, and have it witnessed by the Jumedara." This was Rāmdas' command 117 The Muhammadan replied "It shall be done He made out the deed The Shūdra farmer was happy, and made his *namskāra* to Ramdas 118 The chief officer of the post made his *namskāra* to Ramdas, and went back to his town post Rāmdas started hastily, and arrived at Chaphalakhore

EVENTS IN THE CHĀPHALA VALLEY

119 He remained here at Chaphala one night, and then went to Battisa Shirale When he went into the town to beg his food the people were taken with surprise 120 They remarked 'He is young in years, but seems to have complete indifference to worldly things In form he is very beautiful There is a luster to his body He looks like a divine *avatāra*"

121 After taking his bath, Samartha performed all his regular duties Then bringing Maruti into his contemplation, he began to worship Him with love 122 At night time he began his *kirtana* The people of the town assembled *to listen, including very distinguished* Brah

mans All listened intently. 123 To begin with there were hymns of praise, in which they were reminded of the special form in which God was to be contemplated. Rāmdās spoke from his full experience Listen to what he said.

(Verses not translated)

124 Thus Rāmdās spoke of those who had received final Deliverance, and urged on all who were engaged in worldly affairs to keep Rāma in their thoughts. 125 That, man's great desire should not be for son, wife, money and property Those who spend themselves in doing good to others, naturally receive Final Deliverance 126 Those desiring Final Deliverance have attempted many ways aside from that of Shri Rāma, but all such have been sad failures, and they have found no escape from rebirths and and redeaths 127 There are some who call themselves wise, but have no love for the worship of God in His *saguna* form They deceive people by their knowledge of words Such certainly find themselves unable to attain their purpose 128 He who is the-Chief of-Yogis, the-Dweller in-the-Cemetary Holder-of-the-bow Pinaka [Shiva] became absorded in the contemplation of Rāma. How much more must others do so? 129 Therefore, the foundation of all means, the boat that is to take one across the sea of this earthly life, is alone the worship of Rāma. It is the original source of the Yoga doctrine. 130 This is the Rāma, lovely in character, whose noble deeds have been beautifully sung by Vālmiki in a billion verses, and which when Shiva heard, he attained peace

131 As people listened to Rāmdās' *kirtana*, they felt in themselves an indifference to worldly things Then lighting the lights, they were waved over the Husband-of Sitā [Rāma] 132 There were then shouts of "Victory, Victory," accompanied with the clapping of hands The sweetmeats were then brought in, and distributed to all.

133 The next day, with great reverence they caused Rāmdās to remain there a while Some came as suppliants to the *svāmi*, giving to him their bodies, minds and wealth. 134 Some seeking after supreme spiritual riches lost all desire for earthly things in their chaste religious life Some attached themselves to Ramdas All these experienced a joy of soul 135 Some seized with a desire of service, became disgusted with their worldly life Some, feeling that their domestic life meant trouble, retained their family life, but were indifferent to all bodily desires 136 Some with strong desire to preserve Samartha's words, took pleasure in writing them down, and bringing to their remembrance their inner meaning, comitted them to memory 137 Thus after helping many in their desire for the supreme spiritual-riches the *sadguru* went again into the forest, saying to himself 'It is useless to have a great crowd of followers It simply leads to pride 138 It is Rāma's command that I should give the initiatory *mantra* to would-be disciples but I do not like this reverence that is paid me Still it has come about through my Fate" 139 Thus thinking to himself, and alone in the forest, he worshipped Rama all night long He sang of the infinite deeds of the *saguna* God [Rama] with feelings of love

RĀMDĀS VISITS SHAHAPURA

140 While continuing to live in the forest, he came to Shahapura. He went into the town to beg his food Pious people made him obeisance 141 When Samartha performed his *kirtana* at night, a great crowd assembled to hear him. After listening to his oratory they exclaimed "Blessed, blessed' 142 The Brahmans said to one another One should not call him a man. He has become an *avatāra* of the *saguna* God for the salvation of the world.

ĀKĀBĀI RĀMDĀS FIRST FEMALE DISCIPLE

143 The chief town official of Shahapura had a

daughter by name of Akā She came to the *svāmi* and placed her head at his feet She said 144 '*O sadguru*, I have the desire to obtain from you the supreme-spiritual-riches' Having seen the sincerity of her heart he replied 'You may proceed with the materials you have brought' 145 She had brought a large amount of materials for his worship perfumes, rice, garland of flowers, fragrant pastes bananas cocoanuts and dates 146 She had made ready garments, ornaments of various kinds to be used in his worship She seated the *sadguru* and lovingly washed his feet 147 She made the threefold marks on his forehead and smeared his person with the thin paste made of the fragrant sandal wood She placed the garland of flowers around his neck, a sight that brought a sense of peace to the eyes 148 He was waved over with incense lights camphor, and the platter of lights The Giver of-Final Deliverance [Ramdās] ate with expressions of love the offering that was made to him 149 She circumambulated him and with expressions of love made him eleven prostrate *namaskaras* The *sadguru* being throughly satisfied in his own heart (regarding her sincerity) gave her the initiatory *mantra*.

150 Just then the king Shivaji came and reverently worshipped Rāmdas He had had very dainty food prepared and gave a feast to the Brahmans 151 Recognizing the sincerity of the king's heart, Rāmdās remained at Shahāpura, and there was daily the loud sound of the *kirtanas* with cries of Victory, victory,' and the loud repeating of God's names. 152 Those who came to the *sadguru* with sincere hearts he gave them purification of heart Their characters at once changed Their hearts were impressed with indifference to worldly things. 153 After spending some days there Samartha again went into the forest followed by his crowd of disciples

seeking to find him 154 In company with his crowd of disciples he visited Shahāpura every day on his begging errand. Afterwards he would return to the forest in which he wandered about indifferent to bodily comforts

RĀMDĀS VISITS SIRĀPURA

155 It happened one day that Rāmdās was visting Sirapura While begging in the town, pious people made their obeisance to him 156 Accompanied by his crowd of disciples, he did not remain even a moment before any house He would cry out 'Victory to Rāma,' and then immediately hasten away from there 157 Yet they obtained much food from their begging Daily they were able to make offerings to Brahmans At night *kirtanas* were performed, attended by a great many people 158 As they listened to Samartha they became fully repentant And the feelings of *bhakti* and indifference to worldly things inclined their hearts to the Supreme spirtual riches

RĀMDAS CURES A LUNATIC

159 The town clerk of Sirāpura was a very pious and wise man He had two sons Listen to their names 160 The elder son, named Dattoba was of an excellent character and intelligence The younger was named Ambajipanta 161 The younger son Ambaji had suddenly lost his mind He appeared to the people as a lunatic. He was unable therefore to obtain a wife 162 Because he could not get married, his mother and father were in great distress They made use of very many remedies but he did not regain his mind 163 Hearing Rāmdas' praise loudly sung they said to themselves "Ramdas must be a portion of God So bringing Ambāji along with them, they came to see and worship the *svāmi* 164 They said to him 'This is our son, but for many days he has acted crazy He is of no use in our domestic life It is altogether impossible for him to get married"

165. Thus saying, they, placed Ambāji at Rāmdās' feet, adding "We have now offered him to you, and will not take him back." 166 Samartha felt puzzled over the remarks of the parents, and said. "He is an intelligent person, but he has become possessed by the Five-Elements. 167 I am a skilled exorciser I can drive far away the evil influence of demons If one is in possession of the *Sadguru's* [God's] Name, what can a dead demon do?" 168 Hearing Samartha's words, all the people, were astonished, and exclaimed 'What are the Five element demons? We dont understand you" 169 Samartha replied 'You should call a saint, who is an exorciser He can drive the Five-element demon far away, and bring one back to intelligence" 170 Ambāji's parents answered 'O *Sadguru*, what saint is there greater than you? We see no one 171 Rāmdās hearing them say that, composed a five verse poem filled with blessings, dealing with demon possession

(Verses not translated)

172 While Rāmdās was delivering these verses Ambāji was falling at his feet The insanity of his mind disappeared and he remained to serve his *guru* 173 His parents, very happy, returned to their home They had given their son as an offering to the *sadguru*, and all were pleased. 174 Those who daily repeat the six *abhangas* contained in the Panchaka [Five stanzas] on demon possession need have no fear of the evils of demon possession, or of the evils of this earthly existence

175 In the next interesting chapter, the desires of the listeners will be fully satisfied Mahipati requests the saints to listen with close attention 176 Svasti This book, the Santavijaya, by the mere listening to it fulfils the longings of the heart Let the God loving, wise *bhaktas* listen. This is the eleventh delightful chapter

CHAPTER XII

FACTS LEARNED FROM THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

1 The purification which can be had by bathing in all the sacred watering places that are in Heaven earth and the lower regions, the same is obtained by the listeners to the stories of the saints 2 Also the great festivals are present in a *kirtana* During the *kirtanas* the thirty-three million gods stand around listening to them with intense interest 3 The four *Muktis* [Four stages of Salvation personified] with hands joined palm to palm become servants of those *bhaktas* who by listening to the Hari *kirtanas* become wo thy recipients of good gifts 4 The Eight *Siddhis* [Accomplishments personified] become the *bhakta* s slaves and like to marry them but because they are indifferent to wordlly things they do not accept them [the *R ddhis* or *Siddhis*] 5 The *bhaktas* care for nothing but God All else is as nothing and God cares for nothing el e but his *bhaktas* Each one pervades the mind of the other

NEW DISCIPLES JOIN RĀMDĀS

6 In the last chapter the going of Ramdas to Shirapura was related. He here initiated Ambaji as one of his disciples his insanity having disappeard 7 The characteristics of devotion knowledge and indifference to-worldly-things appeared in him He was all the time repeating God s names and was entirely obedient to his *sadguru* 8 Reverent in his *swami s* service he was always ready He failed in no regard and his heart was always full of great joy 9 As a result he became a learned pandita He now understood Sanskrit and in Samartha s daily *kirtanas* he joined in the singing with the enthusiasm of love 10 He was a clever understander of his *swami s* mind.

In his hand writing his letters were like pearls. He was always writing down Samarth's delightful poetry as he composed it 11 As fast as the words left the lips of Rāmdās he would write them down on paper with the utmost speed He never asked Rāmdās to repeat. It was as if he had already committed them to memory 12 When Ambāji performed a *kirtana* it was pleasing to Samartha. In Ambāji's *kirtana* his heart felt love expressed itself in words falling from his lips and Rāmdās would wag his head in approval 13 Ambāji became skilled in the knowledge of harmony of time of tunes, and accents, and an expert in the composition of songs and a lover of simple poetry 14 Although he possessed so great an array of talents he possessed no pride He went as usual into the town to beg his food perfectly obedient to his *sadguru*

15 Many disciples now stood ready for constant service There was Vāsudeva Gosāvi a man of supreme knowledge and experience 16 Vāsudeva Gosāvi was a supreme *bhakta*. Ananta Gosāvi was one wholly indifferent to worldly things Moro Gosāvi was devoted to his *guru's* service and a lover of worship 17 Uddhava Gosāvi was every where known. Mādhava Gosāvi was a man indifferent to worldly things, and a man of knowledge These stood ready to serve day and night because of their love for Rāmdās. 18 Whatever Samartha's lips uttered that was what all thought Now you pious *bhaktas* listen to the state of Ākābāi's mind

RĀMDĀS TESTS THE SINCERITY OF ĀKĀBĀI

19 Samartha said to Ākābāi I wish you to go away from me I wander about in the forests You should not go there at all 20 The ravines and valleys are full of thorny bushes Tigers wolves and intense heat are there You cannot endure the life there even for a moment

Go back at once to your home" 21 She replied: "I will not spend a single moment without you, *swāmi* I have concentrated body, soul and all my property to you"

22 Seeing her determination, Samartha tested her He said to himself 'To test her I must do those things that will create a rupture between us" 23 He then began to exhibit childish pranks, and act as if crazy He went into Ākabāi's house and began his mischievous deeds. What they were, listen 24. With his own hands he mixed together oil and ghee He also took out from the preserve jars the macaroni, (eaten with sugar and milk) 25 Samartha went where the pile of earthen jars was and smashed the grain jars. He collected in one heap all the eighteen kinds of grain. All this while Ākābai was laughing merrily 26 When Ramdās found that these acts did not trouble her mind, he put her through another great test. After a night had passed he said to her 27 "Listen to me, Ākabai You have taken from me the Supreme spiritual riches Now call all the Brahmans together, and distribute to them all your money and grain." 28 Hearing her *sadguru's* words, she was supremely happy She immediately invited the Brahmans and herself went and bathed with her clothes on 29 She brought out of her house her vessels, her other property, her money, and her heap of grain, and placed them by her *guru's* side Without any hope of any gain thereby, she offered all to Rama. 30 Having mentally made this offering, she stood near Samartha with hands joined palm to palm. 'Distribute these things with your own hands" she said. "I am your suppliant in every way' 31 At the command of Samartha, the Brahmans began to loot the heap of grain And while he distributed the vessels and other things Ākabai had only joy 32 Her jars small and great, her mill stones, and her stone mortar, all these Brahmans took away Ākabai exclaimed 'It is a good

thing done My *guru* has broken the bonds that bound me to this earthly life." 33 Samartha then said to her: "Go into the town, and beg your food" She immediately took the begging bag, and went into the town. 34 Just as an expert applies the sledge hammer to test the diamond, as gold is tested by melting and rubbing, and thus its value is recognized; 35 as the jewel taken from the serpent's head is wound around by a string, and then must be thrown into the fire, and if the string does not burn, then the jewel is proved to be of value 36 So, Samartha tested Akābai's determination by his severe treatment Her mind met the test, and he took her with him into the forest

STORY OF AMBĀJI

37 Other disciples of worthy character went with him at that time They dropped all anxieties of mind, and gave themselves to the constant service of their *sadguru*. 38 Thus Samartha left Shirapura accompanied by his disciples They went up a mountain, and there encamped 39 From here some were sent to beg for food. Some remained to serve Some assumed the duty of sweeping a place where one could sit for his bath and devotions 40. They made a clean place under a mango tree There was a well near by containing an abundance of water 41 There was also there a great banyan tree whose branches spread in every direction One of these branches extended over the well A Shudra farmer said to Ramdās 42 "Here is a dense, cool shade Your Greatness should perform your baths here' Then Ramdās ordered the Shūdra, and his own disciples 43 ' The branch of the tree extends over the well, and the leaves fall into the well. It gives an offensive odour to the water I will tell you what to do, listen 44 If you will take an axe, and cut off the branch, then only will I bathe here" Thus remarking to them, he arranged his seat, and sat down 45 To Samartha's

suggestion no one made answer. It was evident that in cutting off the branch an accident could not be prevented 46 To climb up the tree, in order to cut the branch, seemed also very difficult, and the cutter would surely fall with the branch, and without doubt be killed. 47 Thinking thus of the danger, no one replied to Rāmdās In the meantime the disciples who had gone to beg for food returned, and placed their begging bags before the *swāmi* 48 Samartha now said to them ' Now all of you consider If you will cut off that branch, then only will I bathe here" 49 Ambaji replied very timidly. " It will take some time to cut the branch down So, it would be well, if you would bathe now" 50 Samartha replied ' I have made a vow. When that is fulfilled, then I shall bathe ' Ambaji then went into the town to get an axe 51 Accepting Ambaji's decision, Samartha bathed, and then arranging a seat under the branch, sat down. 52 Having gone into the town Ambaji soon returned with an axe He tied a rope to the branch and climbed up to it 53 He said to his *sadguru* "If I cut off the branch, it will suddenly fall on you Samartha answered I am going to test your cleverness. 54 Ambaji thought to himself No matter what happens to me but it must not hurt Samartha. This is what I am anxious about 55 If the branch should fall on Samartha, I could not bear the pain ' Then careless of his own life, he adopted the following clever devise. 56 He sat towards the end of the branch with his face towards the trunk, and merrily and powerfully wielded his axe Every one was looking at him from below 57 As the branch came down it fell far from the *swāmi*, but the son of his *guru* [Ambaji] fell into the very deep water of the well 58 There were many disciples there, and they all cried out ' Alas alas! What will Rama do now? This is a great disaster 59 All were in great anxiety, but Samartha sat unconcernedly on his seat Finally he

said "It is past the time for the food offering to be made. Arrange the plates for the meal" 60 Ākābāi then stood before him with hands joined palm to palm, and in a pleading voice she said "Ambāji is drowned in the well. I feel very sorry about it" 61 Samartha replied 'He is gone somewhere or other, and I am very hungry Serve the food on the plates at once' 62 Obedient to Samartha's command all the disciples bathed, performed the other regular duties, and then sat down in a line to eat 63. They worshipped the *sadguru*, and the food was served on the plates. Ākābai came close to the *svāmi* and whispered to him 64 "Merciful to-the-lowly Statue-of Compassion, I am very sorry about Ambāji. I do not feel sure what happened to him 65 Samartha replied "He has doubtless gone off somewhere He will eat later Please serve me at once 66 You have no connection with him Look out rather for your own interests. Some logs of wood come floating in the stream of a river, (In the same way we all have been accidentally brought to-gether) 67 They meet with a large island in their course, by the force of water and they are separated into different directions In fact, no one is able to support another all life through 68 The mother that gave us birth, does not remain during our lifetime When the cord of life comes to its end, our father leaves for the path that leads to final deliverance 69 God, Brahmans and the witnessing fire complete the marriage tie with *mantras* from the Vedas, but the husband dies, and the wife alone suffers widowhood. 70 And so brothers, sisters, uncles, daughters, sons, houses and properties none of these belong to anyone 11 fore, one should worship Rama alone 71 So long one has property, all come to claim their connection with him When poverty comes, he belongs to no one. All leave him, and go away 72 Where does Ambāji belong? Whose is he? For a few days he was related to us because

of what he owed to us Why do you feel sorry about him? Contemplate Shrī Rāma."

73 While Samartha was saying these things King Shivājī arrived He prostrated himself on the ground, and worshipped him with the usual materials for worship 74 Food was served on the plates, and all ate Although Ākabāī was full of anxiety, still she also sat and ate 75 The king noticed the large fallen branch, and he asked Ākabāī about it She told him the whole story from beginning to end 76 The king said "If what you say here is true it will mean a great catastrophe But the *Guru* has extraordinary power Let us see what will happen." 77 Samartha having given him leave to go he returned to his place The rumour, however reached the people that Ambājī was drowned. 78 Then they began to repeat the news to one another The news spread from town to town and people came to see what had happened Different opinions were expressed Listen to them 79 One said ' What sort of a superman is this Ramdās that he should have caused a Brahman to be drowned? He seems to have had no compassion in his heart 80 Another said 'The well is a shrine of water deities, and because he (Ambājī) cut down their tree (branch) they have taken him as their victim 81 A third remarked The *sadguru* has many disciples, and will gain many more Ambājī lost his life yet no one has felt any pity 82 Still another said When he was drowning Ramdās made no attempt to save him If he had been drawn at once out of the water he would have survived 83 And again another remarked Formerly Ambājī was a lunatic He came as a suppliant to Samartha and he brought him to his senses 84 Another added 'He cured him no doubt, but his end was sad His parents made of him an offering to the *Guru* and he let him drown in the water 85 Ramdās is the king's *guru* so we cannot say anything

said 'It is past the time for the food offering to be made. Arrange the plates for the meal' 60 Ākābāī then stood before him with hands joined palm to palm, and in a pleading voice she said 'Ambāji is drowned in the well. I feel very sorry about it' 61 Samartha replied "He is gone somewhere or other, and I am very hungry Serve the food on the plates at once' 62 Obedient to Samartha's command, all the disciples bathed, performed the other regular duties, and then sat down in a line to eat. 63 They worshipped the *sadguru*, and the food was served on the plates. Ākābāī came close to the *svāmi* and whispered to him 64 'Merciful to-the-lowly Statue-of Compassion, I am very sorry about Ambāji I do not feel sure what happened to him 65 Samartha replied "He has doubtless gone off somewhere He will eat later Please serve me at once 66 You have no connection with him Look out rather for your own interests Some logs of wood come floating in the stream of a river, (In the same way we all have been accidentally brought to-gether) 67 They meet with a large island in their course, by the force of water and they are separated into different directions In fact no one is able to support another all life through 68 The mother that gave us birth, does not remain during our lifetime When the cord of life comes to its end our father leaves for the path that leads to final deliverance 69 God Brahmans and the witnessing fire complete the marriage tie with *mantras* from the Vedas, but the husband dies and the wife alone suffers widowhood. 70 And so brothers sisters, uncles, daughters, sons, houses and properties none of these belong to anyone Therefore, one should worship Rāma alone 71 So long as one has property, all come to claim their connection with him When poverty comes, he belongs to no one All leave him, and go away 72 Where does Ambāji belong? Whose is he? For a few days he was related to us because

Saivāji arrived to see and worship Ramdās He made eleven prostrate *namaskāras*, and then stood before him with hands joined palm to palm 95 Samartha said to him: "My Lord the King take here and now the favours I give' At this command of his *guru*, he was very pleased. 96 The plates were served, and when the time came to make the offering to the gods Samartha arose hastily, and a most wonderful thing happened 97 He went to the well calling Ambaji An echo arose out of the well, and the people outside heard it 98 The *svāmi* then further added "Are you still well [Kalyāns]?' The other replied 'Yes, by your good favour' 99 The *svāmi* said to him 'Come out of the well, and meet with these good people here" He obeyed the command, and fell at Ramdas feet 100 Seeing such a miracle, all were full of joy, exclaiming "Even the multitude of gods Brahmadeva and others, do not know the depth of this *sadguru's* greatness 101. Ambāji was drowned in the fathomless water of the well, and now it is the seventh day. How is it that he has lived?"

102 The Brahmans came and sat each at his plate and Samartha made the offering of food to the gods All ate, and the *pāna supāri*, and gifts of money were distributed 103 The king was given leave to go, and he went back to his city, Satāra From the deeds he had seen that day, he had a joy that his heart could not contain. 104 'Seven days in the water, and then to come out at the call of Samartha' This news spread from town to town and people hastened to come and see for themselves 105 There were those, who were bad *bhaktas*, crooked in their lives and evil minded. When they heard the news, they repented of what they had said. Now they remarked "We have wrongly spoken evil of Samartha, leading to the loss of riches in good deeds"

RĀMDĀS GOES TO CHĀPHALA

106 Samartha said to Ambājī " Let us go into the next town. " Every one by this time was calling Ambājī, Kalyāna Gosāvī. 107 So after Samartha had performed the above deeds, he left that place, accompanied by his disciples, worshipping Rāma as he went along

108 He encamped on a mountain near Chaphala He built nice raised platforms, which caused a sense of rest to the beholder 109 Here also they built an upper storey for Samartha, which those who have the authority to worship the *guru*, can see there even to this day 110 Rāmdās remained here a few days, then wearying of the place, he went to Shahapura

111 Here at Shahapura there was a very ancient and beautiful idol of Māruti. He remained near it, and daily worshipped it 112 The pious men of the place daily listened to his *kirtanas* and as they listened to the reading of the Dāsabodha (the *magnum opus* of Rāmdās), their minds were absorbed with interest 113 Householders, merchants, very many of them Vedic Brahmans, wise panditas, *bhaktas* of Vishnu according to the Bhāgavata doctrines, all assembled to listen 114 Women Shudras, and members of other castes, listened with intense interest If any one expressed a doubt, Samartha would clear away the doubt 115. The audience sat around Samartha, while he sat, as it were on a throne Samartha looked like the moon among the stars. 116 Like Indra among the gods, like Shiva among the yogis or as the Husband of Lakshmi [Vishnu] among his *bhaktas*, it brought happiness to the eye 117 In the same way Rāmdās shone in all that circle of listeners Kalyāna Gosāvī read the Dāsabodha with enthusiasm. 118 He read where Samartha speaks of the extent of the three sources of pain, of their origin from

spiritual and physical sources His teachings brought conviction to those who were seeking salvation.

119 There was a man in the audience listening most gladly, and as he listened he felt a sense of repentance He asked the *svāmi* a question 120 He stood with his hands joined palm to palm before Samartha "I have experienced much sorrow, but I am unable to get free from this worldly life What shall I do? 121 I say to myself 'I will abandon all worldly living' But my relation to worldly things does not abandon me Your Greatness must supply the remedy' And with this he fell at Ramdās' feet 122 He who is scorched by the threefold pains comes to repentance through association with the good and by listening, he, whose heart has grown weary of this worldly life, is to be considered a seeker after salvation. 123 This merchant householder in listening to the reading of the Dāsabodha had repented. Such is the great influence of a saint 124 The man stood there before Samartha that day with his hands joined palm to palm Said he 'I am caught in the snare of this worldly life Deliver me, O Merciful One 125 Your Greatness [Samartha] has descended as an *avatāra* on to this earth to save mankind Give me today the initiatory *mantra*, and let me remain with you as a disciple" 126 To the pleadings of this man Samartha replied "You enjoy the worldly life, therefore you continue to live with your family 127 Parents care for their children and waste their bodies with the idea that they would be useful to them in their old age 128 The wife who, in fact, is a burden to one's back likes him as long as she gets good clothes and ornaments But when one dies, she unwillingly parts with her hair

129 In the case of one's daughters and sisters, however fondly they are treated when at one's house, the least drawback in sending them off will make them say

in anger "Well it is that our father (or brother) died." 130 If one of the brothers does not in part share the burden of the family, others think him to be their enemy, and drive him out of the house, saying "How long shall we support him, if he does not earn?" 131. If poverty comes to one, then the evil minded sneer and laugh at him. His son says "He has put me into debt." 132 One's enemies are born as one's brothers and children to claim their debt or to put one into debt None of them would surely share with one in his sorrow 133 If you have no children, still there is pain in the vows you make to have them Or you may have children and they die That sorrow makes you mourn. 134 Perhaps your son may live, but turn out to be worthless, quarrelling with his father in his old age That gives pain to the heart, and you say "A childless one is better off" 135 So this worldly life is the root of sorrow It is like a mattress of live coals. The man who thinks he can get joy there, is a hundred times a fool 136 One cannot get a moment's peace on a bed infested with bugs Even if you try to sleep in a folding posture, you are uneasy all the time 137 Even if it were really true that one can attain God while living this worldly life, then why did Shuka and others act as if insane, and go and dwell in the caves and clefts of the mountains?

138 As Samartha continued to speak thus, the man's repentance greatly increased just as when there is the slightest light it gives light to all 139 The man now said "O Merciful-to-the-lowly, if all sins were collected together, I would be a statue made from them. There is no limit to my faults. 140 I recollect today every sin that I have even unintentionally committed. I am today drowning in the sea of that worldly existence. Save me from it"

141 Samartha replied to him Your heart is entangled in your family affairs I have to wander in these dense forests How can you make use of such a life as mine? 142 The man answered in reply "I positively will not go back to my home And with this declaration he immediately fell at his feet with sincere devotion

143 After a few days the *sadguru* [Ramdas] started for the forest The circle of his disciples together with that man, all followed him into the forest. 144 There they saw Ramdas with his eyes closed, engaged in quiet worship And as he sang prayers to the Lord of Ayodhya [Rama] he was enraptured by the joy of love 145 The circle of his disciples now came around him and having made their *namaskara* to him they sat down by the well 146 Samartha said to the man Why have you come into this forest? He who has a sincere desire to become indifferent to worldly things should obey his *guru* 147 Your mind is in both directions towards worldly things and towards the supreme spiritual riches. In such a case how can you gain the required knowledge? Let your mind be firmly convinced of this 148 The man replied *In your company all the illusions of Maya will* disappear Samartha hearing him say this replied in *abhangas* which saints should listen to with reverence

(*Abhangas* not translated)

149 When the man heard these words of Samartha s that tested the rightness of his thought his mind came to a peaceful rest 150 The man then said My lord *sadguru* whatever command you give me I will obey it absolutely I shall do nothing contrary to it 151 Ramdas kept in his mind what this seeker after salvation said and in company with his disciples he went into a still deeper forest

RĀMDĀS TESTS A BRAHMAN S TRUST

152 Suddenly they saw a well It was overflowing with water The trees here were very dense And they sat down there 153 The long branches of a tree were spread over the well Samartha said to the man "Hasten, and climb up that tree." 154. With this command of his *sadguru*, the Brahman at once began to climb the tree Ramdas continued "Now come over the well" When he heard that, he became frightened 155 Indeed he became terribly frightened 'I shall fall," he cried. But though trembling with fear, he continued climbing to the topmost branch. 156 Samartha then gave him a further command "When a teacher punishes a boy, he makes him lock his fingers over a pole, and hang from it Now seize hold of the branch in the same way 157 Hearing this command, he locked his fingers together over a branch, then letting both feet free, he hung in mid-air 158. The *sadguru* then said to him 'Now swing back and forth just as you do in your worldly life ' The man cried out: O Samartha I am afraid I feel as though I shall fall" 159 As he looked down he felt dizzy, and the water looked deep While the Brahman was thus hanging in mid air the *sadguru* asked him a question 160 "Is it the branch that is holding on to you, or is it you who are holding on to the branch? To this quesion the Brahman answered 161 "For fear of my life, I am holding on to the branch. I am just like the silkworm that continues to fasten itself in its cocoon" 162 Samartha replied to that 'Your heart is its own enemy You have rushed into worldly things, and entangled yourself in them just as you have entangled yourself in that branch. 163 If it was the branch that was holding you, then, I should say that it was your family who are the cause of your being held to your worldly life What we see now is that you are holding on with both hands Let go at once 164 If you say that

the worldly life has seized you, then why are you holding on with both hands?" Hearing the command 'Let go' given him by Samartha he nearly fainted away. 165. "If you wish for your own good let go both hands." At these words of Samartha's the Brahman trembled violently

(*Abhanga* not translated)

166 The *Sadguru* continued to say "A parrot sat on a twig It was afraid of falling, so it grasped the twig tighter with its claws 167 It did not occur to it that as it had wings it should fly away And so the hunter caught it and kept it in a cage all its life 168 Or again one bores a small hole in a stone and inserts in it some kernels of *harabhara* A monkey fills his fist full of them, and then being unable to draw out his filled fist he struggles in vain to free it 169 The monkey man then comes up to him, and puts a chain around his neck He then takes him from house to house and makes him make *salaams* to the people 170 Like the parrot and the monkey even good men get entangled with earthly things It is they who are responsible for their own bondage just as you are doing in holding on to the branch 171 Now let go both your hands When sinking in the water Rama will protect you He saved the stone in the sea He will not let one drown who is seeking for final deliverance 172 As Samartha uttered those words the man forced his will by the power of his courage and letting both hands go sank to the bottom of the well 173 As the circle of his disciples looked on, they exclaimed The same thing is happening to him as happened to Kalyana. People came there to see, and reported that a Brahman was drowned

174 While all this was going on Samartha was sitting in silent contemplation on the mat that he had spread He was thinking of Rāma and his heart was full of joy

175 Turning now to the Brahman, as he sank in the water, lo and behold! As he opened his eyes he saw a beautiful city, surrounded by the wish trees 176 He saw there Samartha's hermitage [*matha*] which was exceedingly beautiful, with beds of flowers and clumps of *tulasi* plants To see these, brought peaceful rest to his soul 177 Surrounding this hermitage were clean rest rooms There were people sitting there listening to that simple book, the Dāsabodha, which Kalyāna was explaining to them 178 In the middle of the assembly there was a gorgeous throne, and on it sat Ramdas He looked here just as he did elsewhere 179 As the three sources of affliction were being explained, the man became very repentant and exclaimed 'O Samartha, save me your suppliant by giving me the initiatory *mantra* and making me your disciple 180 He worshipped Ramdas by the prescribed methods He prostrated himself before him eleven times Ramdas then at once installed him as one of his disciples, giving him the secret *mantra*

181 Returning now to Samartha by the well, where he was sitting on his mat in contemplation, suddenly he called out to the man Come up at once ' 182 Hearing this command while in the water he came out without a moment s delay He embraced Samartha s feet 183 The *sadguru* then said to him "In order to remove the doubts of all relate in detail what you saw as you were sinking in the water' 184 Hearing Samartha's words, he immediately began to relate what happened "Svami, you were there, and whispered the *mantra* in my ear 185 Kalyana Gosavi was there reading the Dāsabodha to the assembled multitude at Shahapura, and in the water I saw all who are now here with you 186 Then all looked at their royal *guru* His body seemed to glow with a brilliant light The people bowed prostrate before His Majesty exclaiming "We cannot understand the limits of your

power" 187 God performs deeds but the deeds of the saints seem greater than His By performing these miraculous deeds, he sets men to worship God 188. In this *Kaliyuga* even Brahmans have degenerated Corrupt Muhammadan kings are ruling, and continually troubling their subjects 189 There is the fear occasioned by untruths Deities have become like stones The power of *mantras* has disappeared Justice and morality have sunk out of sight 190 If one turns to the sacred watering places, made famous by the Puranas, they have become mere water And when one looks about for some means of salvation, none is to be seen 191 Then God, Dweller-in-Heaven, gave a command to His *bhaktas*, that they should descend to the world of mortals and turn men to the worship of God. 192 And this *Sadguru* Ramdās is in truth the *avatara* of Maruti, and Mahipati is a bard who sings in his verses the praises of the worthy deeds of the saints

193 Svasti This book is the *Shri Santavijaya* By the mere listening to it the desires of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the twelfth delightful chapter

CHAPTER XIII

GOD IS ATTAINED BY BHAKTI

1 Repeating of *mantras* austerities religous ceremonies sacrifices gifts good deeds visiting sacred places, all these are deeds prompted by selfish desires, and therefore have a low origin [*rajogun*] 2 But deeds done without selfish desires lead to *bhakti* Deeds done with the selfish motive do bring about results, but without *bhakti* God can in no wise be attained. 3 Even if there is no sincere worshipful feelings in the heart, still one should be continually repeating God's names for by doing so sin loses its power and the heart is easily purified 4 And when the heart becomes repentant one should go to one's *sadguru* as a suppliant and offer to him one's body, soul and property 5 The *sadguru* being pleased, whatever the Giver of final deliverance gives as the *mantra* full trust should be placed upon it and it should be constantly repeated 6 God will be pleased thereby, and will give a direct manifestation of Himself to those who seek after Him Such indeed was what the Dweller in-Dvārka [Krishna] said to Uddhava as recorded in the Bhāgavata Purāna

RĀMDĀS SMITES THE ROCK AND WATER GUSHES OUT

7 In the last chapter there were two stories related, one about Kalyāna and the other about the Brahman in the well to whom Rāmdas preached in order that he might break the bonds that fastened him to worldly things

8 Immediately after the above events Samartha got from his seat, and started for the Chāphala valley His band of disciples followed after him, and then went into the town to beg for food

9 Meanwhile king Shivājī was disturbed in his mind. Said he "In what forest can Samartha have gone? At once he sent out his scouts to search in the forests, great and little 10 The scouts looking for him everywhere finally came to the Chāphala valley Here they suddenly heard of his whereabouts The Svāmī is here, so the people said 11 The scouts were exceeding glad to hear this, and returning to Sātārā informed the king of their discovery The king was very glad 12 His bodyguard of soldiers was made ready, and the king immediately started As he hurried along his retinue soon wearied, and his ministers were left far behind 13 The king rode on the liveliest of horses During the first watch of the dawning day he travelled the twenty eight miles of distance 14 Here a farmer told him that Rāmdās had gone up the mountain He was now intensely thirsty, but there was no water to be seen. 15 He gave his horse over to the man and on foot began to climb the mountain He saw many tigers wolves and bears along the way 16 But the king walked along without fear, because of the favour of Samartha Having climbed to the very top of the mountain he there saw his *sadguru* 17 According to his usage he prostrated himself on the ground before him But now he was intensely thirsty and his moon face was pale 18 Samartha said to him Why have you come so far? I have often told you merely to think of me 19 The king replied Your command is my law In my mind I am constantly thinking of your feet but a *bhakta* wants to have a direct visual sight of his *sadguru* for, it brings peace to his vision

20 The king now made a sign to Ramdas' disciple Akābaī, and asked her whether she had any drinking water with them If so fill a drinking vessel and give it to me' 21 Akabaī replied There is not one drop of water on this mountain My brother disciples have

gone to beg our food What is to be done? 22 The king sat still but he was in great distress from his thirst Just then the disciples returned and placed their begging bags before Rāmdas 23 They prostrated themselves on the ground before him Akābāi now said to them "The king is in distress from thirst You must go at once and bring some water 24 When Samartha heard this conversation, he said 'It will take too long to go down the mountain for water' Thus saying he performed a miraculous deed Listen to it you pious folk 25 He took his staff and thrust it with his hand against the mountain side. Suddenly a stream of water gushed forth resembling the stream issuing from a stone pipe carved into the shape of a cow's head 26 The water was deliciously cold and all drank of it with pleasure remarking In praising this water we have done homage to all sacred waters in the three worlds 27 There was no water in the mountain Samartha created it by his desire alone That steady stream of water is flowing to this day and can be seen by the *bhaktas* of the *Sadguru* 28 In order to save Sagara Bhagiratha brought the Ganges Through it the whole universe is saved the dull of mind being delivered by merely looking at it 29 Or as Krishna created the *Bhagavadgitā* having Arjuna as his pretext for doing this so seekers after final Deliverance are saved by its meaning by committing it to memory, by meditating on it and listening to it 30 So Rāmdas brought water out of the mountain side because the king was distressed from thirst That sacred water has still cleansing power and fully saves the humble souls

31 In this water that issued from the mountain all bathed and then cooked their food and ate 32 Rāmdās gave the king leave to go and he returned to his residence

(at Sātārā). The Svāmi remained in the forest, and his disciples went daily on their begging rounds.

RĀMDĀS TESTS THE DEVOTION OF HIS DISCIPLE AKĀBĀI

33. After some days Samartha left for another forest. Akā was at his service day and night, cooking the food he ate. 34. She prepared milk-macaroni by the basket full. So that whenever Samartha was hungry, she cooked it, and set it before him.

35. On one occasion the *Sadguru* expressed dislike of it, and began his particularly irritating test of her devotion. It happened that it was the month of Shrāvana (August) and the sky was dark with the falling rain. 36. Torrents of water were falling day and night. In the midst of the storm, Samartha climbed to the top of the mountain, and then remarked to Akā that he was very hungry. 37. Then four of the disciples stood holding an awning by its four corners over Rāmdās. The wet wood would not burn, but finally they kindled a fine bonfire. 38. As soon as the milk began to boil she prepared the *khīra*, but with great difficulty. She added the sugar, and then spoke to Rāmdās 39. Joining her hands palm to palm, she requested him to sit down and eat But Samartha replied, "I am not hungry now," and started for another forest.

40. The next day when it was raining, Rāmdās said to her: "Fry some wheat cakes, and serve them to me. Four men then held an awning, and started a fire for cooking. 41. After having prepared this dainty food in ghee, Akābāi besought him to partake, and fell at his feet. 42. Samartha replied: "It is now evening, you were very long in preparing it, and I am no longer hungry. 43. I am not going to eat now. Give it to whomsoever you like." Akābāi listened, but her mind was not vexed. 44. Her devotion was fixed on her *Sadguru's* feet. Her

bhakti was continuous, unbroken, and immovable He sought to irritate her into leaving his company 45 But there was no confusion in her mind. She felt the great joy in his service Said she "Let happen what may, I care for no other means of salvation. 46 If Samartha will not eat, then I will remain fasting '

The next day the *swāmi* went into another great forest 47 In a dense thicket there was a great striped tiger When Samartha saw it, he gave it a command 48 "I want to spend a night here, so go into some other forest and leave this place to us' 49 As soon as the tiger received this command it got up and went away Rāmdās went into the thicket, and spent the night there 50 The next day before the sun arose Rāmdās went with his disciples to another forest

RĀMDĀS KILLS BIRDS AND BRINGS THEM TO LIFE AGAIN

51 The *sadguru* said to Kalyāna "Make a *galula* [pebble shooting bow] with your own hands and give it to me' 52 Kalyāna immediately split a bamboo, smoothed it with his knife and made the *galula* He brought it to his *swāmi* and he accepted it 53 Samartha took it in his hand and wandered through the forest playing with it Just then the king arrived to meet Rāmdās, bringing with him the materials for worship 54. The king worshipped the Giver-of final-deliverance while he was playing with his *galula* and then taking leave of him, the king returned to his own place 55 All the religious mendicants with their matted hair, now assembled before the king Shivāji and said ' Your father was our protector 56 It was through Shiva that this kingdom has come to you You do not seem to realize this and so do not give us due honour 57 Rāmdās is a crazy wanderer in the forest. He gave you the initiatory *mantra* and so you have abandoned your Kshatriya duties, and are continu-

ally running after him 58 He is not in his right mind. Can he save you? Your actions do not seem right. One should act with reason. 59 By associating with Rāmdās, you have abandoned us You have ceased to associate with the pandits who are the pillars of the Vedas and Shastras 60 These matted hair mendicants spoke in a way to drive away the kings devotion from Rāmdas The king however made them no reply and persisted in his silence 61 These matted hair mendicants then sent one of their number into the forest with the instruction to observe the manner in which Rāmdas was living 62 If you see any fault in him come back and tell us "I will do so the Yogi replied and started for the forest. 63 Just as the filthy crow looks continually at a sore, so a crooked and an evil minded man looks for some lack or failing in the saint 64 Samartha a discerner of inner thoughts understood what was in the man s mind, but he said to himself One should be courteous even when striking an evil man so I will let him see a miracle " 65 Thus thinking Ramdās started to amuse himself in the forest He had the pebble bow in his hand with which he was shooting at birds 66 The disciple of the Yogis was sitting at a distance watching As soon as he saw what Samartha was doing he rushed off to give information 67 Two hundred Gosavis [Yogis] sat in consultation and decided to inform the king privately that Ramdas was shooting birds with his pebble-bow in hand 68 The whole body of these Gosavis then hastily arose, and went before the king saying O King show us your forest-inhabiting *guru* 69 The king was already prepared to go so he said to the Gosavis Come along with me to see that Samartha 70 All arrived at the forest the bodyguard of soldiers the Ministers and the Gosāvis. And there was Samartha with his pebble bow in hand, shooting pebbles at birds 71 His aim was faultless

Hit by the pebbles the birds died at once, and one after the other fell to the earth. He then said to his disciples 72 'Take your begging bags, and fill them with the dead birds." At the command of Samartha the disciples did as they were told 73 While this was going on, the king approached him, and prostrated himself on the ground. The Gosāvis protested saying to the king "Why do you bow to one who kills?' 74 'You Rāmdās give wisdom to others, but as for yourself you show your indifference to worldly things by killing living creatures and bewitching the pious-minded. 75 Samartha replied to them: 'He who kills and makes alive is Rāma In your ignorance you mistake about me, and blame me without cause. 76 The formless substance, the Cloud-dark [Vishnu] had Brahmadeva as His own child and Creation, Life, and Destruction are by the power of His might 77 The Infinite Being, holder of the strings, pulls the strings controlling fate. Not knowing Him, why do you blame me for being His instrument?' 78 The Gosavis replied to Samartha 'But how is it that you in our very sight killed these birds with a sling in your hand? The blame is on your head. 79 Samartha responded "I have killed them, you raise them to life Show this miracle to the king and he will then worship you " 80 The Gosāvis exclaimed 'You fool, when life has departed, not even Brahmadeva, or the other gods, can bring a corpse to life. What is our might compared with theirs?" 81 Rāmdās listened to their harsh words, and then replied in an *abhanga*. I quote it here Let saints and all good men listen to it

(*Abhanga* not translated)

82. After repeating this *abhang* he continued killing more birds. Samartha then said to the king "Collect the dead birds as I shoot them.' 83 At Samartha's command the king began to collect them. The Gosāvis remarked to

themselves "The king has become one degraded." 84 Then emptying the bags, they made a heap of these dead birds before Samartha. The Sadguru then said "Go all of you and collect faggots in order to roast these birds" 85 The disciples, together with the king, gathered sticks and placing the dead birds under the sticks set them afire 86 Just as the fire began to blaze, all the birds flew away, and as all looked up to see them, they exclaimed "Blessed is the greatness of the saints" 87 Samartha put out the fire, and looked for birds among the sticks, but there was none left All the revilers were thus put to shame 88 With shouts of 'Victory, Victory, the circle of *bhaktas* clapped their hands Naturally the faces of the haters turned black 89 The Gosavis felt ashamed, and returned to their homes while the king lovingly worshipped the Giver of Deliverance [Ramdas] 90 As soon as he was given leave, the king returned to his city And as the Saviour of the-lowly [Rāmdās] returned to his place a large multitude followed him

THE NAMES OF RĀMDAS DISCIPLES

91 Listen now to the names of those disciples who remained with Ramdās in the forest The very listening to their names frees one from the bondage of this worldly existence 92 Vāsudeva Gosavī formerly a householder in Kanheri Uddhava of Takali known over the world 93 Girmaji of Bhoinja who was a cowherd in the Balaghata region. Krishnaji, and Haragāji citizens of Pandharpura. 94 Shivarama Gosavi and the Great Poet as he is called, both from a town in the Konkana, the history of Kalyana being already well known by you, good people 95 Sirgava is a town near Pali and that was the home of Dattoba Gosavi, Ananta of Tārala as he is called 96 Ānanda Gosavi, and Mauni, were both from the town of Nilanga Naganatha of Adasula whose *guru* was Bhima, and whose

bhakti was full of reverence 97 Mādhava Gosāvī of Parnera, foremost in devotion and knowledge Milājī of Kudālakhore constant in service 98 Bholārāma and Bālakarāma, whose home town was in the province of Varada. They set aside all desires for worldly things, and clung to the good company of Ramdās 99 Shivarāma Gosāvī of Parande and Dinkara of Tīsagāva Besides these, there were those without limit who remained in their own homes 100. There was also Akābāī of Shahapura and Venubāī of Kolhapura. They had put aside all thought of being ashamed, and clung to the feet of their *sadguru* 101 Ambikābāī s former home was in the district of Junnara. Annabāī of Kanhera also was one who meditated on the feet of her *sadguru* 102 All the above band of disciples were constantly with Samartha They went out to beg, and brought back an abundance and no one thought of this as a burden 103 Victory to Rām, ' was their cry, and then the band of disciples hastened away from that street But pious and good people followed them, and gave to them 104 Some gave grain some rice, some gave flour; others *dala* Some gave merely vegetable leaves, putting them in the begging bag, 105 The merchants in their shops would give termeric ginger and cummin seed. They did not lack a single thing For all *siddhis* (accomplishments personified) were his (Rāmdas') slaves, as it were

106 Begging is, in fact, a wish cow The saints devised it for those seeking final deliverance, but the advantage of it comes only to those who beg without being ashamed of it Others would die of hunger 107 If a man becomes a Haridasa for the sake of worldly gain, and hence feels ashamed of begging his food then it is evident that the net that binds him to earthly things is not ruptured, and what he does is merely for outward show 108 Whatever is freely given should be received

with thankfulness If the seeker after salvation should ask for more, he becomes blameworthy. 109 Such was the rule for begging that Samartha laid down The disciples would bring back their full begging bags, and place them before their *svāmī*

110 There were four women who accompanied Rāmdas, so that the cooking was most excellent. A large number of Brahmans were accustomed to dine with him in forest feasts

OBJECTION TO RĀMDĀS' WORSHIP IN KOLHĀPURA

111 On one occasion Samartha was sitting on his mat contemplating the image of Rama, and worshipping Him with feeling of love 112 A man came and prostrated himself before the *svāmi*, saying "Kolhāpura, as you know, is a sacred city, a place for good deeds and the gaining of purity 113 The Goddess Mahālakshmī is there, and all worship Her Kirtanas and recitations in honour of Rāma are not pleasing to the people 114 If one repeats aloud "Rama Rāma," people say "You must not use such inauspicious words Those words are to be used only when dying In this way they frighten the pious people" 115 Hearing the man say this, Ramdas laughed, remarking "This Kaliyuga is difficult to restrain It deceives even the wise 116 If we speak of Rama as Brahma, the goddess is merely the shadow of Brahma. She has bewitched the three worlds, and made them submissive to her 117 Because those beings who worship Rama at once are absorbed into Brahma therefore, this bewitcher of the universe puts confusion in the minds of men 118 If a person does some unusual misdeed which he should not do, still his mind is not at all agitated But the moment his father hears of his conduct he slaps him in his face 119 A thief and an adulterer accomplish their aims at night, but the moment the sun arises

through fear they slip away hiding 120 So to hold to the worship of Rāma is a very difficult thing' On this subject Rāmdās composed an *abhanga*, to which you, good people should listen with love

(*Abhanga* not translated)

121 While Samartha was repeating this *abhanga* Kalyāna Gosāvī wrote it down There is no need of commenting on it, as all saints are familiar with it

RĀMDĀS FEELS A CALL TO PREACH AT KOLHĀPURA

122 Rāmdās having heard of the events taking place at Kolhapura, and that the name of Rama was not permitted to be spoken aloud (in Mahālaxmi's temple) he was very much astonished 123 And then Samartha thought to himself "Rama has commanded me to preach to men and to start them on the path leading to His worship. 124 So I must go into the District of Karhāda and help men to pursue the supreme-spiritual-riches. On listening to my *kirtanas* their conduct will change. 125 I, who am *bhakta* of Rāma, have no rebirths or redeaths whatever But in order fully to save the world I have assumed this visible body" 126 Thus thinking to himself, he started for the Karhāda District All his band of disciples followed after him lodging in whatever village the *svāmī* lodged. 127 With no desires in their minds they begged for food from house to house When it was night there were enthusiastic *kirtanas* and people came and listened with reverence 128 As they listened to Samartha's *kirtanas* their hearts melted with repentance If anyone came to him with sincere motives, he would give them the initiatory *mantra*, making him his disciple 129 If it was his good fortune to have Samartha's lotus-hand rest on his head Indifference-to-worldly things pervaded his being, and the noble Vaishnava became a *bhakta*. 130 He developed a love for the worship of Rāma, and separated him-

self from the six enemies of the soul. Thus Rāmdās with great joy brought salvation to this world 131 He turned very many women and shudras, both men and women, to the way of bhakti. Arriving at Karbāds, he performed there his enthusiastic *kirtanas* 132 When the Brāhmans of the place heard Ramdās' name, they came to listen And when they heard his eloquent speech their minds were overwhelmed.

VENUBĀI BECOMES RĀMDĀS' DISCIPLE

133 The Deshpande [official] of Karhāda was a very widely respected gentleman His efficient daughter was an earnest listener at the *kirtanas* 134 She was a widow, and her name was Venubai. Her listening led her to sincere repentance, and she said to herself 'I must do something by which my soul will have final attainment' 135 And so she went to Samartha and bowed to him in the sincerity of her feelings She exclaimed "I have come as a suppliant to you with body, soul and wealth And so, Merciful One you must give me the initiatory *mantra*, making me your disciple 136 The *Sadguru*, recognizing her by his power of inner sight said to her "Make preparations.' At this command she greatly rejoiced 137 She prepared dainty food of various kinds for a Brahman feast And then with loving devotion prepared the things needed for the worship of the *Sadguru* 138 She prepared the upper storey for the worship of the *svāmi* She designed many patterns with coloured powders and spread the mat on the floor 139 She polished the brass lamps, and placed them in a circle She then smeared fragrant perfumed oil on the *svāmi* 140 They bathed the god [Ramdās] with hot water, and then wiped him dry Kalyana dressed him in a beautiful yellow robe Then the service of worship was begun 141 The three marks were made on Ramdas' forehead They smeared him with thin sandal wood paste They put a garland of flowers around his neck, to see which

brought peace to the soul 142 Venubāī waved the incense and the lights and offered the perfumed powders Offerings and gifts were placed before him and she prostrated herself on the ground 143 Samartha then called her to him and whispered in her ear the *mantra* consisting of God's names As those words fell on her ears her heart felt a sense of peace

144 Meanwhile a feast was prepared. The Brahmans bathed and returned The water in which their feet were washed was sipped and they were lovingly worshipped 145 The leaf plates were set and the divine food was served The whole assembly of Brahmans then arose and came to see and worship the *Svāmi* 146 To some he seemed to be Māruti himself Some saw Samartha as the embodiment of wisdom To some he seemed a crazy fool Each one's attitude brought its own fruit 147 After all had made him a *namaskara* they took their seats by their plates. Just then Venubāī appeared with vessels full of food to be used as offerings 148 Samartha then gave a command to Kalyāna to allow no one to come near him, and told Venubāī to go down to the feast and herself perform the act of offering the food to the Deities

149 Samartha then sat alone by himself and brought to his mind the form of Māruti. And Māruti appeared in visible form and lovingly ate 150 Venubāī brought some more food in a dish in order to serve Rāmdās And there she saw Māruti eating with him That filled her with fear 151 Indeed as she saw his divine glorious appearance she suddenly fainted away and began to fall from the upper storey Rāmdas grasped her by his hand. 152. The Brahmans who were standing below watched the *swami's* great agility While she was falling in mid air he seized her by the wrist and lifted her back. 153 The Brahmans seeing this most unusual sight were terrified

But Samartha assured them as he pulled Venubāi up 154 Ramdas then asked her "Mother, what did you see?" Venubai held him by the feet, and replied 'I saw a man as if made of light 155 His robe was as if of gold At his back I saw a tail He aroused my fear, and I fell on the ground in a faint' 156 Samartha said to her 'I have a great number of followers but none of them have had a vision of Maruti Your good fortune is a special one

157 In the meantime the feast continued, and all had their hunger fully satisfied The Brahmans took the *pānasupāri*, and the gifts of money, and went back to their homes. 158 Ramdās brought more food, and served it on a plate Maruti ate all of it He then drank some water, with evident pleasure 159 As she gave the *pāna supāri* to Samartha [for Maruti] he vanished out of sight Ramdas then ate what was left on Maruti s plate as the latter's gift to him. 160 When it was night all his followers, including women and shudras, dined. Akabai then came bringing some light food. 161 She said 'The food offerings made at noontime were all eaten up by Maruti, so now eat this light meal ' To this Samartha assented

162 In the meantime preparations for *kirtana* were made Mats were spread, lamps burned on all sides, and every one came to listen. 163 Samartha began the *kirtana*. His circle of disciples stood at his back He first sang an *abhanga*, which I here quote

1. The name alone of Rama accomplishes what all other means accomplish
2. Repetition of *mantras* austerities and religious rites may be used but at the end of life only the Name of Rama avails
3. No *mantras* or other means can deliver one at the end of life

4 An infinite number of great sinners have been saved by His name.

5 His name is the cream of creams and the refuge of all

6 Says Rāmdas, "How often have *I to tell you*, that there is no other course but that of Rāma's name ? "

164. In this manner the Merciful to-the-lowly [Rāmdas] widely established the Way *of Bhakti*, and in preaching the value of the Name he brought punishment to the evil minded 165 Samartha also established that the way-of-knowledge is connected with Indifference to worldly things. His stories of *saguna* God touched the hearts of all 166 In the *kirtana* there sounded the cymbal, and the sweet sounding drum There was a great flow of sound All shouted aloud the name of Rāma so that the whole of space was filled with it, 167 There was clapping of hands and snapping of fingers The noble Vaishnavas danced with joy The *kirtana* lasted during the four watches *of the night*, and *then came the wave offering to* the Husband-of Janaki [Rāma] 168 The Brahmans of the highest rank unitedly requested Ramdas to remain there for at least a few days In order to satisfy their desire to listen Samartha assented. 169 There were present also other pious people who came to him with undivided devotion Samartha did them the kindness of giving them the names of God for them to repeat 170 Ramdas remained *there for three days*, and performed his *kirtanas* overflowing with divine love On the fourth day he left for his forest retreat, without informing any one

VENUBĀI IS POISONED BY HER PARENTS

171 After the sun had arisen the circle of disciples *went* in search of Ramdās Venubāi was greatly troubled, her heart was in a flutter 172 She therefore asked her

mother's permission to go also, saying · "I am going to visit my *svāmi*" The mother replied "That is a disgraceful thing for you to do By no means may you go into the forest" 173 "If I am separated from Samartha I shall be worried by household affairs What shall I do?" Venubai said to herself. Her heart was in a flutter. 174 Just then she saw a company of Rāmdās' new disciples starting off to see and worship their *sadguru* Venubāi made her own determination, and went along with them. 175 Entering into the forest, she reverently made Rāmdās a *namskāra* and placing her hands palm to palm, she said in a pleading tone "I am going to follow you" 176 The *sadguru* counselled her "It is not well for you to be in the company of a crazy fellow (as I am considered to be) The evil minded will make fun of you in many unpleasant ways, and then you will find your heart confused. 177 Before your physical death you should die to all worldly things and perform over them the funeral rites. Then only can you have joy in my company. I have no liking for hypocrites 178 Hold in your heart the image of the Holder of the-bow [Rama] and worship Him in your own home After He bestows on you His favour your relatives will separate themselves from you 179 I have to go far from here otherwise I would take you along with me So go back, and fulfil your duties at your home and sing of the deeds of Shri Rāma. 180 Thus instructing Venubai he sent her back to her home She then sat in the God room and worshipped by herself 181 She committed to memory the *abhangas* of Samartha and lovingly sang them She would bring to her mind the form of her *sadguru* and worship him mentally

182 In the meantime Samartha left the forest, and came to Shahapura Venubāi heard the news of this, and she came to see and worship him 183 She stayed there

but a day, and at night listened to an enthusiastic *kirtana*. Samartha gave her permission to leave, and she returned to her parental home 184 Her father-in law heard the details of her visit to Rāmdās, and came to the home of her father, and complained to him of her conduct 185 Said he "She is well on now to sixteen years of age, and has begun wandering about from town to town All my relatives laugh about her You should know all this 186 Ramdas has with him some unmannerly and unmarried disciples. How is it that you parents in this home allow her to go so far away? 187 From now on if any scandalous report is heard about her, you should not blame me" So saying, the father-in-law returned to his home

188 Venubai's mother and father laboured greatly with her, but she would not listen to them. She said "If my husband were living, then the domestic life would have been my duty 189 But now I have embraced my *Sadguru's* feet with my body, soul and property Shri Rāma is my father, and Sitā is my mother In clinging to them, I shall accomplish my purpose in life" 190. Her mother and father, hearing her, remarked: "She no longer questions her conduct But around our heads we shall hear the buzz of scandal." So saying, their hearts were in deep concern. 191 One should hear of one's daughter as dead, or as living honourably at her mother-in-law's And so they brought some poison, and made her drink it 192 It set her stomach aflame She tossed about like a fish out of water She cried: 'I am about to die, O my Guru, and Protector, rush to my aid and save me 193 For the salvation of the world you are the visible *avatāra* of Māruti There is no one but you to care for me' 194. Thus exclaiming, Venubāī fell unconscious to the ground And Rāmdās by his power

of inner sight realized it all. 195. The powers of a man who has reached the highest attainable accomplishments are very wonderful, and they were manifested on this occasion. The corpse lay on the ground, and a large crowd of people had gathered. 196 They remarked to one another: "It was but a short time ago that she was wandering about the town. In the meantime what is this that has happened to her? Only God, the Dweller-in-Heaven, can know the reason." 197. Her mother and father were ostensibly weeping, but in their hearts they were saying: "We have committed child-murder, and the guilt is on our heads."

198. As soon as Rāmdās saw the situation through his power of inner sight, he brought before his imagination the form of the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma] and brought to his remembrance His distinguished deeds. 199. He then prayed: "O Dweller-on-the-banks-of-the-Sarayu-river [Rāma], hasten to my aid. Thy name is a life restoring nectar; so said the Muni Vālmiki, and that is not an untrue description. 200 Shiva once drank poison, and his whole body was aflame with it. But when he repeated the name of Rāma his body was cooled." 201. Thus praying, Rāmdās, the Brahmachārī, passed a *rattan* stick over her. Venubāī immediately vomited, and the poison was thrown up. 202. She at once arose, and placed her head on the feet of her *sadguru*, saying: "It was my father and mother who gave me the poison. What a demon my mother is! 203. You Merciful-to—the—lowly have done well, and have torn the net of Illusion. Now I shall always be with you my Svāmī," So saying, she immediately followed him. 204. Samartha walked in front, and Venubāī walked behind him. Soon both arrived at the valley of Chāphala.

205. In the next chapter I shall describe some noteworthy deeds that possess the nine poetic sentiments.* Mahipati is dependent on the saints, and therefore a possessor of fair fame.

206. Svasti. This book is the *Santavijaya*. By merely listening to it the longings of the hearts are fulfilled. May the God-loving pious *bhaktas* therefore listen. This is the thirteenth delightful chapter.

* The nine sentiments are love, mirth, pitifulness, anger, heroism, fear, disgust, surprise, and tranquillity

CHAPTER XIV

HOW THE MIND IS BEST CONTROLLED

1. While seeking to contemplate God, one cannot always restrain the mind, because of its fickleness. It loses the thought of essential unity, with God, and causes one to wander hither and thither. 2 One may feel he should perform a sacrifice, but he has no money with which to do it. In this Kaliyuga givers are poor, and the miserly will not give to the worthy. 3. Some are weak in body, and so cannot walk to the sacred places. One would like to read the Purānas aloud to others in Sanskrit, but one has not the necessary intellect, one is dull minded. 4. Although one may attempt the system of breathings, still the mind is not in one's control. Those who say they will adopt the *vajrāsana* posture find that God sends them hindrances. 5. Therefore, it is best to put away all desires, and sing with love of the deeds of *Bhaktas*. There are no means greater than this, and it is in every way simple.

VENUBĀĪ AND AKĀBĀĪ PERFORM KĪRTANAS BEFORE KING SHIVĀJĪ

6. In the last chapter we had as special events the hatred of the Gosāvls for Samartha, his killing of many birds and then bringing them to life. 7. The parents of Venubāī giving her poison, because she was seeking the supreme-spiritual-riches. And then how Rāmdās suddenly appeared there, and gave her the gift of life again. 8 In that way the net of Illusion was torn from her, and she placed her thoughts on the lotus feet of her *guru*. She then followed her *sadguru* with intense love. 9. Her heart was full of joy. Just as when a serpent slips away from the juggler, and crawls into the hole of the ant-hill,

Venubāī felt the same joy it feels. 10 Or as when a parrot is put in a cage, and then suddenly the cage gets its door loose, and flying away, it sits on a bough looking for its mates. Such was Venubāī 11 And when in the vale of Chāphala, she saw the assembled *guru* and brother disciples, her heart was supremely happy Indeed there was no limit to that joy 12 Through the favour of Samartha, she received knowledge, and she began to perform *kirtanas*, and give recitations acceptable to the wise

13 When it was dawn the band of disciples went out to beg for food, and Akā did the cleaning and the sweeping, and began the cooking 14 Suddenly King Shivājī appeared on the scene to see and worship Rāmdās. He brought with him some excellent mangoes, and filled baskets with them 15 The disciples who had gone into the town to beg, brought back a great quantity of food with them Then all performed their baths, and devotions, and in the meantime the cooking was completed 16 The plates were laid, and the food served The mangoes, which were given to every one, when squeezed yielded to each one a cup full of juice Thus all dined 17 At the *swāmi's* request the king also dined and *pīnasupūrī* was distributed to all Samartha then gave the order to perform the *rājayoga* rite 18 A square raised seat was prepared, decorated with flowers. In the middle was erected an altar of the *tulsi* plant Inserted in it was a banner of Māruti 19 On this raised platform, they made a beautiful throne, and Samartha sat on it The king's eight ministers stood in front with hands joined palm to palm 20 Rāmdās was clothed in a garment with gold and silver thread He was adorned with jewelled ornaments, which the king himself put upon him 21 Some acted as staff bearers and with their eyes fastened on his feet they announced to Samartha any new person who might

have come to see and worship him 22 Forming themselves into a line, they all stood about him Suddenly Akābai began a *kīrtana* in which the theme was philosophic knowledge 23 Then at the *swāmi's* command Venubai began her recitation of divine deeds The goddess presiding over the *kīrtana* appeared on the scene, as it were, and all were deeply attracted 24 Then Samartha spoke in nectar words that all of them should perform a *kīrtana* in praise of Hari Each one took a *ghatikā* [24 minutes] for his performance as requested by Samartha 25 Among them were Kalyana Gosavi, Vasudeva Gosavi, Āpa Gosavi, Uddhava Gosavi, Moru Gosāvi, Mādhava Gosavi, and how many more shall I name? 26 While listening to these *kirtanas*, the king fell into the state of bodily unconsciousness He forgot who he was because he had become one with the divine essence 27 Ramdās recognized that the king had become unconscious of body, and composed a benign *abhanga*, which I quote here Listen

(*Abhanga* not translated)

28 For two days the king did not regain consciousness. The eight Ministers became alarmed, saying "This is not a good sign" 29 Samartha then called all his disciples together, and said to them 'In the presence of the king do not dwell on the theme of philosophic knowledge 30 He comes every day searching for me in this great forest in order to see and worship me He looks on his royal wealth as so much straw, and has become quite indifferent to all worldly things 31 Now how shall I make him understand how he is to carry on his duties as a Kshatriya? Samartha thought over the matter, and then began the writing of his book, 32 full of *bhakti*, worship, prayer, knowledge, right-thinking, and indifference-to-worldly things whereby those can be saved who seek for salvation

RĀMDĀS COMPOSES THE *Dāsabodha*

33 It was really at Shri Rama's command that Rāmdas began the composition of the *Dāsabodha* The Svāmī pronounced the blessed words, and Kalyāna wrote them down. 34 Rāmdās composed the verses, as if he were repeating them from memory, and Kalyāna immediately wrote them down without having to ask Rāmdās to repeat them 35 Samartha sat down to the task from early morning, and as he completed the book the sun was rising

36 Kalyāna then arose to make his *namaskāra* to the sun, when behold! he could see nothing whatever with his eyes. This made him heave a heavy sigh. 37 Samartha said to him ' Faithful one, what is it that is troubling you?" The other placed his head on Samartha's feet, saying "Samartha, I cannot see with my eyes' 38 Samartha said to himself 'He was writing steadily for eight watches, so that his eyes have lost their sight Samartha then passed his hand over the man's eyes 39 By that he regained his divine eyes All the band of disciples wondered and Kalyāna was full of joy

At the same time the king regained his bodily consciousness. 40 Rāmdās had written seven chapters in the *Dāsabodha* on the duties of a king These he had copied, and given to the king The king read them with feelings of peace. 41 Just as when the armies of the Kauravas and Pandavas came together, Arjuna felt the temptation not to fight, and said to Krishna ' O God, I certainly will not fight ' 42 Arjuna then threw away his bow and arrow, and descended from his chariot Then it was that Krishna composed the *Bhagavadgītā* in order to remove the temptation from him 43 So in this case the king Shivāji having listened to the above story had become indifferent to worldly things and had said - " I am

going to give up my kingship." So then it was that Samartha composed the *Dāsabodha* 44 By listening to its contents and committing it to memory many seekers after salvation have been saved, and will be saved in the future And so the king came to the same state of mind that the king Janaka came to

THE RĀJAYOGA CEREMONY DESCRIBED

45 As already stated Samartha began the *rājayoga* ceremony, and the king came every day to see and worship him. His worship was according to the usual prescribed custom 46 Ramdās had now a very large following of disciples Some of them acted as if they held the office of the eight ministers. They continually stood before him with hands joined palm to palm and their sight fixed on his feet 47 Some held the whisk brush in their hands and some fanned him with fans. Some stood guard over him and kept back those who sought to come into his presence 48 Some chose the role of singers and sang the praises of Samartha. Finally, when he gave his commands all looked at his face 49 In this manner all his disciples waited upon their Guru for service at all times Even the eight ministers of the king were all the time rendering some service. 50 Just as it was when Krishna was an *avatara* an army of nine hundred thousand cowherds made Shri Krishna king and worshipped Him the Eagle-bannered-one 51 They piled up folded blankets and made them into a high throne For materials of worship they used leaves and garlands of flowers. They adorned him with a necklace of the red *gunja* seed 52 Krishna, seeing the limitless devotion of these cowherds, did not refuse the honour, for according to the feelings which each one had, so He was to them 53 As God is so is His *bhakta* There is not the least difference between them He became an *avatāra* in the world of mortals in order to save the world.

54 Samartha was pleased to have this *rājayoga* ceremony performed, because of the earnest wish of his disciples Brahmans were daily feasted with dainty food including the king and his ministers 55 At the third watch, listening to the reading of the Puranas took place The reading was done by Kalyana at a *kirtana* in praise of Hari which took place and deeply moved all hearts 56 Thus in the performance of this *rājayoga* ceremony twelve years passed Then Samartha went into the forest, and the king was given leave to depart 57 Just as children arrange their playthings and play with them as they feel inclined, and then throw them down and run away, just such an one was Rāmdas 58 The king had copies made of the *Gurugītā* the *Panchikarana'* the *Manache Shloka* and the *Rāmāyana* in verse books composed by Rāmdās 59 The king kept the great book, the *Dāsabodha*, in his library, and was constantly reading it in his private moments

THE ENVY OF GAGA PANDITA IS AROUSED

60 In the king's service there was a learned Brahman named Gaga Pandita He had studied the four shastras. He was an expert in the *Bhāgavata* and famed for his knowledge 61 He had resided in the sacred city of Benares and was skilled in every field of knowledge. The king had, appointed him, so that he might listen to the reading of the *Bhāgavata Purāna* 62 When the Pandita heard the loud praises of Rāmdās and that the king had become his disciple, and was continually serving him, his anger was aroused, 63 just as the moon is spoiled by its disease of waning, just as the sea water is spoiled by its saltness, just as a Brahman of noble birth is spoiled by some low deed, just as a king is spoiled by some rash act 64 just as a field is spoiled by an overflowing stream just as a man is spoiled by intercourse with another woman not

his wife, or just as a quarrel results in the loss of wealth
65 Rāvana possessed so great an intellect that he divided the Vedas into portions, but even he was spoiled by his pride, and thereby gained the contempt of mankind
66 So Gagā Pandita skilled in the Vedas, Purānas and Shastras and moreover one who possessed the title of *Rājamānya* [worthy of a king s honour] was ruined by his hatred, and pride 67. Any one who hates the *bhaktas* of Vishnu suffers the loss of all his good deeds Durvasa had an experience of this in his ill treatment of Ambarisha,
68 But enough of so much talking! However, the giving of illustrations is a poet's prerogative.

When Gaga Pandita heard Rāmdas praised he muttered to himself with envy 69 One day the king Shivāji having bathed, sat in the God room and having unwrapped the *Dasabodha* of its cloth covering, sat reading it with delight 70 Just then Gāga Pandita suddenly arrived The king arose to greet him, and gave him a seat 71. The Brahman now said to the king "What Shastra is it that you have unwrapped from its fold? Is it in Sanskrit or Marathi? Kindly tell me 72 The king replied that it was the *Dāsabodha*, composed by Samartha The Pandita answered It is a great sin to listen to a work composed in Marathi. 73 If you so will, I will read to you the works of Vyasa but from now on, O King you should throw away every Marāthi book 74 Marathi books are for women Shudras and other such people but for Brahmans and Kshatriyas there are the *Purānas*, composed by Dvaipayana'
75 The king replied This book is in harmony with the Vedas and Shastras I have begun to love it greatly I wish you would look over the whole of it 76 While the king was making these remarks the Pandita became very angry, and he said to the king 'From now on I shall not read the *Puranas* to you" 77 With this exclamation, the Pandita returned to his home But this

incident did not arouse in the king any unkindly thoughts regarding Rāmdās, for he was a true *bhakta* of his *guru*.

78. Samartha heard of the incident, and how his book had been forbidden. He, therefore, came with all his retinue, and encamped in the park. 79. After all had bathed, and performed their devotions, they sat down in a grove. In the meantime the king, indifferent to his worldly affairs, was preparing to go and see and worship Samartha. 80. Just then his scouts brought the news that Samartha was encamped in the grove. The king all in a flutter started, and walked barefoot. 81. The eight ministers hurried on foot. All the citizens of the town proceeded to the park. Many Vedic panditas and Brahmans hastened to see and worship Rāmdās. 82. Even the merchants of the city hastened to meet him, and following them came elephants, horses and palanquins. 83. For a short time the king stood looking over the crowd. He failed to see Gāgā Pandita. He gave orders to his ministers to have him called. 84. A horse was given to a clerk, and the king instructed him saying: "Tell Gāgā Pandita to come at once to the grove to meet Samartha." 85. The horseman arrived at the Pandita's home, but was told by him that it was his time to eat, and, therefore, he could not come at that time. 86. "When Samartha comes into the city, and performs a *kirtana*, I will meet him then." The messenger took this message, and delivered it to the king 87. While this delay took place, the whole army approached with their sweet sounding instruments, the music of which filled the sky to overflowing. 88. There were eagle banners and drums. Flags woven with golden threads waved. Dancers sang their sweet songs. Through the music souls experienced a sense of peace. 89. As the king thus came in state into the park, he saw the Giver-of-final-salvation. The king gladly prostrated himself on the ground before him. 90. The eight ministers,

citizens of the highest rank, Vaidikas, Panditas and noble Brahmans, all bowed to him. 91 All shouted "Victory! Victory! to Rāma," as the king hastened to mark Rāmdās' forehead with fragrant powders 92 They made a great head-dress of flowers, and the king placed it on his head. They put a garland around his neck that reached to his feet, a garland that brought joy to the eyes. 93 Thus worshipped, the Giver-of-final-salvation, was seated in a palanquin Music from various instruments now sounded, and the drums were beaten. 94 As many Brahmans as came on foot were given carriages in which to return Crowds filled the streets of the city People collected to see Rāmdās. 95 As the procession neared the palace gate many cannons were fired, and the king, taking the *sadguru's* sandals, placed them before him 96 For a moment Ramdās sat on the royal throne, and then the people left for their homes Then the king brought hot water for Ramdas to bathe with and anointed him with perfumed oil 97 After this perfumed bath, the king clothed him in the yellow silk robe, and worshipped him as rules prescribed with the use of perfumes, rice, flowers and sandal-wood paste. 98 In the meanwhile a feast was prepared The Brahmans went for their bath and returned. The plates were speedily arranged and food was served on them of many dainty kinds 99 Ramdas performed the customary worship of the Brahmans, and then made the offerings to the gods. Each one was served with whatever he desired, and all were fully satisfied 100 After all had eaten and the *pānasupārı* and gifts of money had been distributed to all, the king took the plate of Samartha and ate from it, being the last one to be served

101 With the permission of Samartha, arrangements were made for the *kırtana* Various seats were arranged, and lamps were lighted on every side 102 There was an enormous number of flags and banners to grace the

kirtana The servants of the king with torches in their hands went from house to house to invite the people. 103 Great crowds of people assembled so that there was no entrance through the palace gate It was rumoured from house to house that the *kirtana* was of unequalled excellence

104 Aside from Gāga Pandita all the Brahmans of high rank had arrived as also all the rich men of the city, forming a dense crowd 105 At the command of the Svāmi Venubāi began the *kirtana*, and Kalyāna led the chorus Waves of love stirred the assembly 106 After her Akābāi led in the *kirtana* Then Kalyāna Gosāvi stood up to lead, and showed great eloquence of speech. 107 The Panditas and Brahmans began however, to murmur among themselves The other pious people however listened with loving joy 108 Ramdas was in an inner room but knew of the events taking place He then came out to perform the *kirtana* himself to the great joy of all. 109 As Samartha entered he made a *namaskāra* to the Brahmans and the Brahmans all arose to greet him with hearts full of joy

110 The proud Gaga Pandita did not, however arise at that moment He was proud of his own knowledge and so kept his seat puffed up with conceit. 111 Samartha took in the situation and stood in the middle of the circle He brought to mind with feelings of love Him the Holder of the-Bow [Rāma] and expressing his thoughts in blessed words said 112 "Victory, Victory to Dweller in Ayodhyā Husband of-Sitā Son-of Kaushalyā Son of Dasharatha Killer of Rāvana, the Being-both *saguna* and *nirguna* whose adornments are His *bhaktas* Dear Rāma. 113 Shri Rāma is my Divine-knowledge Shri Rāma is my idea of indifference to worldly affairs. Aside from His name I shall adopt no other means of salvation 114 Shri Rāma is my family *guru* Shri

Rāma is my perfect *sadguru* Shrī Rāma is my dear saviour, to take me across the sea of this worldly existence. 115 Shrī Rāma is my learned listener. Dear Rāma is my speaker on philosophy Shrī Rāma is my blessing bestowing poetry I have no one but Him "

116 When Rāmdās had finished these words, the audience clapped their hands, and repeated aloud the names of Rāma All shouted "Victory ! Victory !" and the sound of voices filled all space 117 As Samartha stood up to perform, the assembly was overcome with emotion Enthusiasm in the *kirtana* reached a high point, which my lips cannot adequately describe 118 He highly praised the might of Rama's name in accord with the teachings of the Vedas and Shāstras He quoted from the Shrī Bhāgavata and clearly explained its meaning

PROUD GĀGĀ PANDITA IS HUMBLED

119 As Gagā Pandita listened he said to himself "Samartha is not human As I watch his features, I see that he is actually Maruti Himself" 120 Gāga Pandita then dropped all his pride of deeds, his pride of knowledge, and his pride of philosophy, and repentant in heart, he prostrated himself on the ground before Rāmdās 121 Ramdas raised him up, and embraced him with both arms, and the Pandita in affectionate words said 'You are actually the *avatāra* of Māruti 122 You seem on this earth to be an *avatara* in visible form, and to have come for the salvation of the world, but you are, in very fact, Brahma Itself Of this my mind is fully convinced ' 123 Samartha then took the Pandita by the hand, and seated him before him As the king watched this unusual sight, he greatly rejoiced.

124 Even the gods delighted to come and listen to the *kirtanas* of Ramdas Seated in their chariots of light, they

listened with love to *the stories* of Hari. 125 All the sacred watering places in the three-worlds, too assembled there [*through their presiding deities*] Also all Festal Occasions stood near by in order to receive a blessing

126 Rāmdās said to his hearers "All the illusory things that you see will in the end be destroyed Rāma alone is the one Eternal Being Worship Him 127 Rāmdās here recited verses on Creation, Existence, and Destruction I quote them as they were spoken Listen, you pious *bhaktas* of his'

(Abhangas not translated)

128 Such was the substance of Samartha's *kirtana* in which he again and again used inspired *abhangas* He convinced his listeners regarding their way of worship, conduct and experimental form of knowledge 129 He also explained the doctrines of the Vedānta and the Siddhānta. All the Panditas were overcome with astonishment, and could think of nothing to say 130 Rāmdās then said to them 'The Marāthī language seems to you to be inferior, but whether in Marāthi or Sanskrit the meaning is the same 131 If one reads the *Purānas* in the Sanskrit, one has to explain the meaning in Marāthī, just as a king's glory is not magnified except through his subjects 132 If one throws iron aside altogether, the marvellous power of the touchstone cannot be known God has from the very beginning created fifty-six different languages 133 But as to the names of Rāma and Krishna there is no difference (no change from one language to the other) The great poets, Vyasa and Vālmiki are witnesses to this in the *Purānas* Ask them 134 God created the Sanskrit language, and the Marāthi originated from a thief, so the wise should not speak. All languages are without beginning and are self-evolved 135 If the Purānics did not explain the

Purānas in Marāthi, they would not be able to fill their bellies" Hearing these remarks of Samartha, all the Panditas laughed 136 Hands were then clapped to the shouts of "Victory, Victory" The assembly was full of joy The king lost bodily consciousness, and was absorbed in loving contemplation 137 Both the wise and the ignorant among the listeners, the women, the shudras and those of other castes, all remarked "Today's *kirtana* has been a most blessed one In listening our ears have felt a sense of peace' 138 The final hymn of praise was then sung and the-Husband-of-Jānaki [Rām] was offered the wave offering Suddenly Samartha ceased to be seen by anyone, and Kalyana finished singing the hymns of praise 139 But when they looked at the throne, they saw the *sadguru* sitting there, and they exclaimed "From whence did he get there?' And all the people were astonished 140 Then at Samartha s command, the favour of sweetmeats was distributed The people then went to their homes and the king was delighted

RĀMDĀS' NEW DISCIPLES

141 Samartha had many disciples The names of those noted for their wisdom and popularity have already been mentioned Listen to the names of those who newly became his disciples 142 Ramaji Gosavi, a man totally indifferent to worldly things His *matha* [religious house] was near Pali He cast aside every share of *Māyā* and gave himself continually to worship 143 Musal Gosavi a man also indifferent to worldly things He lived by the bank of the Krishna river Meru Gosāvi, from the Karnataka country, who became a follower for the sake of serving the Svami 144 Rudrāji Gosavi whose home was in Shahapura Devadasa of Dadegava, a devoted *bhakta* of his *guru* 145 Divakara Gosavi of Parali who acted as Samartha's family priest. Bhānaji

Gosāvi of Chāphala, and Jasvanta Gosāvi, always serving his *guru* 146 But enough of all these details By means of Samartha's coming to Sātārā, Gāgā Pandita was made free of pride, in the way above described 147. The pride that comes from ignorance can disappear in a moment, such is not the case with the pride of knowledge But even this pride was made to disappear

RĀMDĀS GOES TO ĀLANDI AND PAITHANA

148 Without informing any one Samartha left Sātāra Arriving at the town of Bhuinja, he spent a night there 149 Journeying from there, Samartha arrived at Ālandi He bathed first in the Indrayani river, and then went to meet Dnyāneshvara 150 Having worshipped the tomb of Dnyaneshvara, and having fed the Brahmans, he stood up in the assembly hall of the temple, and performed a *kirtana* lasting two watches of the day 151. After spending three nights there, he hastened on to reach the banks of the Godavari Whatever village he passed through, crowds of people came to welcome him 152 Having heard the good fame of Samartha, the town officials would come out to meet him, bringing him the materials for cooking a meal At night they listened to his *kirtanas*

153 Thus with great joy Ramdas arrived at the sacred city of Pratishthana [Paithana], and after bathing in the Godāvari river encamped for the night with all his followers 154 Then with all his followers, Samartha went into the city to beg for food He went to Ekanātha's house, and at the shrine connected with it he worshipped God 155 In the meantime the disciples brought back their begging bags full of food, and the cooking of the meal was completed Many Brahmans sat down with him to eat, and all had their appetites satisfied 156 Then just as the evening began, he went to worship at the altar

dedicated to Ekanātha. And as representing Ekanātha he worshipped the Ashvattha tree, which is well known as God 157 Samartha stood before the pādukās (foot-impressions on stone) of Ekanātha and there performed a *kirtana* All the Brahmans of that sacred city listened gladly to him 158 Rāmdās remained there three nights in Pratishthāna under these happy conditions. As he was about to leave, and finding himself alone, he actually met Shri Ekanātha himself 159 As the sun was rising Rāmdās and his followers bathed, and then started on their way. They arrived at Aurangabād, and immediately started out to beg for their food.

RĀMDĀS MEETS A FRIEND AT AURANGĀBĀD

160 The elder brother of Rāmdās, by name of Rāmi Rāmdas, had come to that same place. He remained there a few days and then returned to Jāmba 161 A follower of his was a resident of Shahāpura When he saw Samartha begging his food, he was full of joy 162 He prostrated himself on the ground before Ramdas, and took him and all his company to his house He worshipped him in the customary way, and then served them food 163 Rāmdās performed a *kirtana* there, thoroughly enjoyed by all the listeners It was a blessed day 164 Kalyana Gosavi in front of the Svāmi performed a *kirtana* Samartha then told him to repeat an *abhanga* containing examples 165 these were to show where and how to beg, in one's country and in a foreign country Kalyana had forgotten the *abhanga*, and could not recollect it. 166 Rāmdās threw his cymbal at him wounding his forehead and causing blood to flow. 167 Although Ramdas was dressed in a costly raiment, he burnt it and with its ashes dressed Kalyana's wound The merciful one then passed his hand over Kalyāna's forehead and behold ! there was no sign of a wound to be seen. 168 Then when Kalyana got up to perform his

kirtana he remembered the *abhanga* Listen to it with reverence you wise people

(*Abhanga* not translated)

169 After repeating this *abhanga* he continued his *kirtana* for four *ghatikās* Then when Samartha arose to perform his *kirtana* every one felt supreme joy 170 Hands were clapped to the shouts of Victory Victory The assembly of *bhaktas* was overjoyed. The whole audience was moved with an amazement that words cannot describe 171 Ramdas explained the true meaning of religious deeds worship and the Way of Knowledge He preached to them on the power of God s name and organized a pleasing service for worship 172 The *kirtana* lasted two watches and then the final hymns of praise were sung Wave offerings were waved over the Husband-of-Jānaki [Rama] and all bowed to him

173 The name of this disciple of his elder brother was Bhavani Nāika. The people requested him to urge Samartha to remain until the next day 174 He replied to them Samartha is under no one s control He suddenly starts to go off It is very difficult to change his will

RAMDAS MEETS BAHINABĀI

175 Just then a Brahman woman arrived by name of Bahinābāi She listened to Samartha s *kirtana* and felt dissatisfied with her in her mind 176 She thought to herself This worldly life is illusory so is this body of mine and my deeds The whole illusory worldly life is, therefore false I must go as a suppliant to this *Sadguru* and in love worship dear Rāma. 177 With this determination in her mind she spoke to Akābai privately that it would be well if Samartha would remain over until the morrow and give her the initiatory *mantra* 178 Akābāi listened and then said The mediation of one of his

followers is of no avail. You must fall at his feet, and lovingly make your request of him." 179. Samartha was seated on his mat, and Bahinī made her request: "Remain over until the morrow together with all your followers, Merciful one, and give me the initiatory *mantra*. 180. I am without a protector, and have come as a suppliant to you. Your very name purifies a sinner. Turn me away from every seduction of this worldly life, and give me a place near you to serve you." 181. Samartha asked her where she lived? Bahinī replied: "I live at Shiura. 182. I came to this city for the purpose of meeting with some of my relatives, and lo! unexpectedly I have had this opportunity that you have given me of seeing and worshipping you." 183. Rāmdās listened and replied: "I shall certainly come to Shiura, and then go on to Panchavatī in order to meet Shrī Rāma." 184. Receiving this comforting assurance, Bahinī fell at his feet. She then went on ahead and made all necessary preparations.

RĀMDĀS VISITS BAHINABĀI AT SHIURA

185 Rāmdās suddenly started on his way without taking leave of anyone Bhavānī Nāika came running after him, and said: "The hopes of many have been disappointed." 186. Samartha responded: "It will not be the right thing for me to return here. I recognize your love for me. Now go back. 187. Whenever you remember me, I shall always be near you." With these words he went on, and arrived at Shiura. 188. Bahinī had made all preparations in her house, and was sitting in the street (waiting for him), just as a girl at her mother-in-law's watches for the message for her to come back to the parental home. 189. From a great distance she was able to see Samartha on a hill and a great crowd with him. She was full of joy, and bowed at his feet with reverence. 190. The people of Shiura had heard of the good fame of Sa-

martha, and the well-to do people went forth to welcome him, and with reverence bowed at his feet 191 Bahinī had selected a very extensive *wāḍā* [house and grounds], and offered it as a place for them to lodge She invited a large number of Brahmans and had immediately prepared a feast. 192 She made every preparation also for the worship of Samartha. She washed his feet with her own hands, and lovingly drank the water with which they were washed 193 She smeared him with fragrant oil, and bathed him as God with warm water She wiped him with her own garment and then clothed him in a beautiful yellow robe 194 She made the three marks on his forehead and smeared his person with sandal wood paste mixed with saffron She put a garland of flowers around his neck, which to see gave the heart a sense of delight. 195 She rubbed fragrant powders on his forehead, and sprinkled some over him She offered to him incense, and lights and the platter of lights and various kinds of food 196 She distributed fruit, *pānasupāri* and gifts, and reverently circumambulated him Thus worshipping her dear *guru*, Bahiṇābāī fell prostrate at his feet 197 Then joining her hands palm to palm, she said "I have come as a suppliant to you with all my body, mind and property Now give me the *mantra* and an opportunity for service close to you" 198 When God [Rāmdas] saw the sincerity of Bahinī he placed his hands upon her head, and gave her the secret *mantra* whereby she was able to cross the sea of this worldly life

199 In the meanwhile the preparation of the feast was completed. The Brahmans bathed and returned The customary worship was performed, and the daintily cooked food was served 200 The greens and ghee were served to each one Then Samartha made the offering to the gods, saying that it was out of love for Rāma. 201

After the Brahmans had sipped the water before eating, Rāmdās sat down to eat and Bahinābāi served to each one according to his taste 202 In this way the feast went on, *pūnasupāri* and gifts of money were distributed, and then the Samartha's *kirtana* began at night, and every one came to listen 203 As the Brahmans listened to the eloquence of Samartha they nodded their heads with de light He dwelt upon the power of the Name of God an idea in full accord with the many *shastras* 204 These *kirtanas* were performed daily for nine days Samartha then left for Tākli, taking Bahinabāi with him 205. Bahinabai committed to memory the poems of the *Sadguru*, and she had the strong desire to perform *kirtanas*

RAMDĀS REVISITS TĀKLI

206 They journeyed along happily and the disciples begged the food as they went along Thus journeying, they arrived at Takli much to the joy of its citizens 207 They exclaimed Fortune has served us well in giving us again the opportunity of seeing Samartha Thus remarking *they prostrated themselves before him on the ground* 208 After bathing, they worshipped Maruti in the usual manner The company of Brahmans performed *kirtanas* Thus three nights passed

209 Ramdas then took leave of Maruti and came to Panchavati. The whole company encamped at the tank called Rāmakunda in order to bathe 210 After completing the usual ceremonies they visited the temple of Rama There they all prostrated themselves on the ground like so many logs 211 Then calling the Brahman attendant they anointed the idol of Rama and clothed him with a beautiful yellowish robe and adorned him also with many ornaments. 212 They placed before him offerings of perfume, garlands of flowers, rice, incense, lights, the platter of lights, camphor, offerings of food

and gifts of money, and reverently bowed before him 213 Then joining hands palm to palm, Ramdās began his praise of Rāma. He said "I am without *mantras*, *without deeds, and without indifference to worldly things*, O God. 214 I am without cleverness and wisdom I do not know anything of religious rites and austerities O Mother Rāma, Purifier of the sinner, carry me across the sea of this worldly life" 215 After making this plea, the hymns of praise were sung and now Mahipati pleads with his hearers to listen with reverence.

216 *Svasti* This book is the *Santavijaya* By the mere listening to it the longings of one's heart are fulfilled May the God loving and wise *bhaktas* listen This is the fourteenth delightful chapter

---

CHAPTER XV

PREPARATION FOR THE STUDY OF THE SAINTS

1. If, in accordance with the laws of governing the infinite number of rebirths, any one is possessed of good deeds, then only can he properly describe in loving words the lives of the saints. 2. If the Husband of-Lakshmi has been worshipped with a heart free from worldly desires, then only there will arise a delight in listening to the stories of the saints. 3. Only when gifts are bestowed in love upon those who are worthy and only when there is a passionate longing to serve the saints, then only on account of the riches of these good deeds one hears the biographies of the *bhaktas*. 4. If one has worshipped Shrī Rāma privately with a contrite heart, then only will a delight in the stories of the *bhaktas* arise in him, who aspires after Final Deliverance. 5. The Seeker after Final-Deliverance, whose efforts are for the Supreme spiritual riches, can only come to know by hearing how the saints live and their method of *bhakti* and worship.

RĀMDĀS TELLS OF RĀMA'S LIFE

6. In the last chapter the stories included the following: Samartha visited Alandi, and then hurried on to Paithana where he met with Ekanātha. 7. Departing from there this Brahmachārī arrived at Shiura and put up in the house of Bahinābāī. 8. He preached to her on the supreme-spiritual riches, and then went on to Panchavati, where to his great joy he met Shrī Rāma. 9. He worshipped him with all the usual preparations, and then began a *kīrtana* at the great door of the temple. 10. As the news of this became known from house to house the people came to listen. The Brahmans of high rank in the city and the

learned and expert *shāstris* said to themselves, "We must listen to Rāmdās' *kirtana*" 11 A great many men and women, with an intense desire to listen, assembled. The pavilion was densely crowded so that there was no way through the crowd 12 In order that His goodness may be supremely exalted, God took the form of His *bhakta*. Each became the father of the other, but there was no distinction in their essential forms. 13 As Rāmdās stood before the image of Rāma, he appeared as attractive as the Eagle appeared when standing before the Great Vishnu, ready to serve Him 14 Or the scene was like that of Māruti, standing before the Universal Ruler, the Lord-of Ayodhyā [Rama] in the attitude of a slave Thus Ramdās in his love described the fame of Rāma in His *saguna* form. 15 They had with them the cymbals, *vinā* drums and all the accessories for music. All the disciples joined in the singing in this enthusiastic *kirtana* 16 Seeing Rāma before him Ramdas composed some *shlokas* I quote them in this chapter Let the good people listen to them with joy

(*Shlokas* not translated)

17 Listen, listen all you people, both wise and ignorant. What other deity is there like Rāma the moving force and the pervader of the universe ? 18 In Rāvana's prison the three hundred and thirty million gods were confined, and Rāma delivered all of them Such was the victorious Rāma. 19 Having killed Rāvana he made Bibhishana king of Ceylon. There is no one in the three worlds to displace him 20 In this world of mortals he made two *bhaktas* immortal, namely, Bibhishana and Hanumanta. So mighty is my Rāma 21 Shri Rāma reigned for eleven thousand years, during which there was no old age, death or poverty on the earth. 22 Rāma is the advocate of the gods, Rāma is the purifier of sinners.

Rāma knows the hearts of His *bhaktas*. There is no one like Him in all the Three Worlds 23 Rāma saved many souls. Shiva was relieved from pain by calling on the Name of Rāma. Rāma performed the miracle of raising a stone slab to life He alone knows His own divine power. 24 Rama is the formless and attributeless [Brahma] unaffected by *Māyā*, the moving force of the universe Still, when his *bhaktas* fall into trouble He assumes form and attributes 25 Just as a bit of crystal assumes the colour of the thing on which it is placed, so dear Rāma in the same way breaks the bonds that bind His servants to this worldly existence 26 In this way Ramdās described the life of Rāma with great earnestness Men and women, as they listened, became enrapt, and nodded their heads at the loud shouting of the name of Rama. 27 The sound of the cymbals, drums and *vina* was very sweet, and the grandeur of the music seemed the very personification of sound Rāmdās then composed an *abhanga*. Listen to it, you pious people, in composure of mind.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

28 Such was Samartha's inspiring poetry, and the audience became absorbed as they listened The discerning ones said it was a gifted poetry It seemed to them like the creation of the nine poetic sentiments * 29. The gods, the celestial choir, demi gods, spirits, and fairies, sitting in their chariots of light, listened to the enthusiastic *kirtana*. 30 These celestial beings whispered to one another "We have no joy that comes from love *Bhakti* has robbed us of it all" 31 While they were whispering these things Rāmdās composed the following description of Rāma, which I quote in this chapter Listen to it you pious ones.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

32. Thus he composed many blessed *abhangas* The

*See chapter 13 205

kirtana went on until the fourth watch of the night, when the sun began to rise 33 Then Rāmdās sang the closing hymns of praise, and waved the wave-offering over the Dweller in Panchavati [Rāma] Favours were distributed to all present, to the great joy of all hearts

34. In this manner Rāmdās continued to perform *kirtanas* for three days Maruti felt joy and embraced Rāmdās. 35 The wise the ignorant, women, Shudras, and all the other people present had their attitude changed as they listened to the *kirtanas* 36 Ramdās' acts of worship were to them, as it were, the initiatory *mantra* in that they began to regard this worldly existence and *Māyā* as illusory and in love began to worship dear Rama. 37 The saints became *avatāras* in order to save the world Otherwise, they are formless and unaffected by the three *gunas* [Goodness, Energy and Evil] 38 *Just as God is, so are his bhaktas Between Him and them* there is not the slightest difference, just as there is no difference between Nectar [the drink of the Immortals] and immortality, 39 just as there is no difference whatever between the sun and its rays between fire and heat, between the moon and its coolness 40 just as there is no difference between a jewel and its brilliancy, between a pearl and its lustre and between the waters of a sacred place and the water of the Ganges, 41 just as there is no difference *between space and sky, between air and its quality of* motion, so God and His *bhaktas* are different only in name 42. In order to increase the glory of His saints, God gives the emotion of love to His servants They plead with God "Give us Thy command.'

RĀMDĀS THINKS OF BUILDING TEMPLES TO RĀMA

43 "I have the purpose in my heart to install the images of Thee in the valley of the Krishnā. So come Thou there, and make Thy servant one who has Thee as

his Protector 44. In this *Kaliyuga* [present evil age] men are unbelievers Wrong ways of thinking have defiled their minds. So, wherever an image can be installed, there show some miracle 45 By *fear or by* devotion incline men to worship thee " Having listened to Ramdās' petition, Rama replied 46 " For your sake *I become an avatāra from age to age The good fame of* this is world wide, spread through the writings of the great Yogi Shuka 47 Namā the tailor, a God loving *bhakta*, was always worshipping me so that for his sake I on one occasion turned the temple of Shiva around 48 Seeing the devotion of Dayanadeva I myself moved the wall, and made the buffalo repeat the Vedas, in order that his name might become famous in the world. 49 Going to the house of Ekanatha for twelve years I brought his drinking water, and when Tukarama s manuscript was sunk in the water of the river, I, Krishna, was its preserver 50 You took a *galul* [pebble shooting bow] in your hands and killed many birds But when you put them into the fire, I brought them to life and made them fly away 51 Whenever you with your own hands install my image there I shall for ever remain, and accept the service of the *bhaktas* "

52 While Rama was thus speaking, Rāmdas placed his head at Rama's feet saying Let your favour continue, O Rama and henceforth be my protector 53 While he thus spoke tears of love flowed from his eyes His throat choked with emotion as he looked upon the dark-coloured one [Rāma] 54 Ramdas could not bear the thought of separation from Him Every moment he kept looking back at him Samartha now started taking with him his whole company of disciples 55 As they departed there was the loud sound of horns and trumpets. Maruti s banner was carried in front of the procession. People flocked together to see them off 56 Samartha, pausing

where he dismissed all those who had come to see him off, gave them his parting counsel to keep Rāma in remembrance, for only so would they prosper in their lives.

SHIVĀJĪ WELCOMES RĀMDĀS ON HIS RETURN

57. Having thus spoken to them, Rāmdās hurried along In whatever town he lodged he performed a *kirtana*. 58 People strongly urged him to remain longer with them, but he would not consent He had no liking for popular honour He was always indifferent to worldly things.

59 Now king Shivājī was day and night worrying over Rāmdās, his kingdom and his wealth ceased to be dear to him He said to himself "When shall I meet Samartha?" 60 His scouts returned from searching near and far in all directions, but they could get no news of him The king gave himself up to fasting 61 Except for milk and fruit he ate very little. He thought to himself 'When shall I meet my *sadguru*? When will Rāma answer my prayer?' 62 Just then Samartha arrived, and encamped in the Park. The whole company performed their baths and devotions The king's scouts saw them 63 With great joy they went, and reported to the king that Samartha had arrived at the Park. Hearing this news, the king was delighted. 64 The whole army was called out The eight ministers also started The citizens joined the procession, because Rāmdas had arrived. 65 There was the loud sounding of the musical instruments. The king walked barefoot As soon as he saw Rāmdas' banner, he prostrated himself on the ground 66. As the king approached near his *sadguru*, he made eleven prostrate *namaskāras* He embraced him lovingly His heart was unable to contain his joy 67 He applied fragrant powders to Rāmdās' forehead, and hung a garland of

flowers around his neck All were happy, because they had met Samartha again. 68 He seated the Sadguru in a canopied tower on an elephant, and sat behind him waving the fly wisp Many instruments began to play. The procession moved gaily along. 69 As the procession arrived at the city gate, guns were fired. And when Samartha entered into the palace he was given a seat on the throne 70 The king worshipped him as formerly, reverently performing it himself He clothed him in all the required garments and ornaments, and then waved the wave offering over his *sadguru* 71 The king gave a feast to the Brahmans, serving them with many kinds of delicacies The appetites of all Brahmans were satisfied The king distributed the gifts 72 The feast was thus celebrated, and at night the Hari *kirtana* was performed. Many people came to listen, panditas, learned *shāstris* and Brahmans among them 73 At the beginning Samartha composed an *abhanga* which I quote in this chapter. Let the saints listen. By merely listening to it, they will get knowledge and inspiration, and the supreme spiritual riches will come into their possession

(*Abhanga* not translated)

74 Such were Samartha's words, a mine of loving happiness The listeners became absorbed Just then the sun arose 75 Then the lamps were lighted and the hymns of praise sung They waved the wave offering over the Husband of—Janaki [Rama] Favours were distributed to all, and then the audience departed

RĀMDĀS TELLS SCULPTOR TO MAKE AN IMAGE OF RĀMA

76 The *Sadguru*, being indifferent to these worldly things, went into the forest He remained there for some days, and then went to the Chaphala valley.

77. One day Rāmdās felt a strong desire to install an image of Rāma there, and celebrate the festival of Rāmanavami [birth of Rāma]. 78. Men will thereby be incited to *bhakti* and praise. 79. He then called a sculptor, and told him to look for some specially good stones and make three images, namely, of Rāma, Sitā and Lakshamana, according to authorized rules, with smiling faces and delicate features. 80. The sculptor listened, and then said: "I will make them and give them to you in due time. Many days are required for such work. They cannot be made in a hurry." 81. After this conversation, the sculptor returned to his home.

RĀMDĀS REMOVES A VILLAGE IDOL

Rāmdās began to feel concerned, and so brought Māruti to mind 82 As he brought to mind the Son-of-the Wind [Māruti], he openly revealed Himself. To relieve Rāmdās of his anxiety, he said to him: 83. "You have conceived a good desire, in planning an image for your worship and I can tell where you can find one. Go quickly and bring it here. 84 Fourteen miles from here there is an image of Rāma in a miserable little village. Go there by night and hasten back with it." 85. After saying this, Maruti vanished; or one may rather say, he entered Rāmdās' heart. 86. Rāmdās hastily started and went there by night When he saw the image, he was full of joy. 87. Rāmdās lifted up the images of Rāma and Sitā and bound them to his back. Then running with the swiftness of the wind, he returned to the Chāphala valley.

88. Now when it was morning, a Shudra came to the place where the image had been. When lo! and behold! he saw no image there This filled him with astonishment. 89. There were many villagers sitting together

and he gave them the news "During the night some thieves must have come into the town, and taken away the images" 90 When they heard it, they all expressed surprise. They came and looked into the temple, and found no image of Rāma there to the astonishment of all. 91 They remarked "One has fear of thieves in the case of gold or silver images of God, but no one has any experience of stone images being stolen' 92 Thus remarking to one another, they rushed in every direction. In the way they met a Shudra who said he had seen the thief that night 93. "I recognized him as the crazy Rāmdas, who is a super man in this part of our country, and wanders about here and there. 94 He had fastened the images to his back, and was running quickly along the way I would have seized him by his wrist, but great wild beasts were following him 95 Seeing great tigers and bears, I was greatly afraid, and climbed a tree, whereby my life was saved' 96 The Shudra having said this, the villagers went to Ramdas, and made their *namaskāra* to him And there they recognized the images 97. They said to the *svāmi* 'You are a distinguished superman How is it that you stole the god, and brought him here? This is a stain on your greatness 98 All the people say that the king has become your disciple Therefore we cannot make a charge against you, but you have done a very improper thing 99 The *Vaishnava bhakta* [Ramdas] listened and then said 'I brought the god here at the command of Rama If your feelings are pure, take Him away" 100 The villagers listened, then brought a large cart, and attempted to lift the image into it but they could not at all move it 101 Many put their hands to the task, and exerted all their strength, but they could not lift the idol at all Then they made a *namaskāra* to Rāmdas. 102 They said "The Husband of Sītā [Rāmā] has

evidently come here on account of your *bhakti.* So now install the image here, and worship Him with affection."

RĀMDĀS BUILDS A TEMPLE AT CHĀPHALA

103 Having spoken thus, the villagers returned, and Samartha began to consider where to install the image 104. He sought for a place near the village, but no place suited him. He then came to the burning ground. 105. Half a mile from the village the river flowed. Mountains encircle the place. The place approved itself to him. 106. All around there was a grove of mango trees, which gave a very dense shade Samartha said to himself: "Here I must install the Recliner on-Shesha [Vishnu]" 107. Then Samartha applied himself to the work of erecting a temple. Gathering together his fourteen hundred disciples, they dug far laying the foundation 108. All the disciples went to the mountain, and brought back on their heads slabs of stone They handed them to the *Swāmi*, and he laid them with his own hand. 109 Just as the monkeys built the bridge [over to Ceylon], bringing mountains on their heads, so these disciples struggled with their heavy loads, but the hearts of all were full of joy. 110. Some took hoes in their hands They stirred the mud and trod it. Some brought the mud to Samartha, and some brought the water. 111. There were in the village hewn stones lying about here and there. They brought these also. There was no one who forbade Samartha from doing so, for all reverently submitted to him. 112 Wherever Rāmdās used his hands, extraordinary beauty was to be seen. Riddhi and Siddhi [accomplishments personified] were serving him The part played by the disciples was no account. 113. Not many days were required to finish the temple including the pinnacle The assembly hall was very large. They also arranged lodging places

for pilgrims 114 All the people aided in supplying the necessities for the warming ceremony of the temple The Vedics and astrologers assembled, and determined the auspicious day 115 King Shivāji also arrived to join in the great celebration, bringing a large quantity of garments and ornaments, needed in the celebration. 116 The news of this temple warming ceremony spread from town to town Many *Vaishnava bhaktas* in crowds assembled 117 In the court, before the assembly hall, there were two *tulasi* altars placed at both sides and the ochre red Maruti banner waved there beautifully. 118 In the meantime the cooking of the feast went on, preparing many kinds of dainty foods. The Brahmans returned from their baths, and began to repeat the Vedic *mantras* 119 The sweet sounding instruments were sending forth their musical tones in harmony with the big and the little drums The *bhaktas* shouted the cries of "Victory, Victory The hearts of all were glad 120 While the rite of putting life into the idol was going on Samartha was pleading with Rama. At that moment the Lord of Ayodhyā [Rama] appeared. The words used by Samartha should be brought to mind

(*Abhanga* not translated)

121 O Rama separation from Thee makes every moment seem like an age O Rama, run quickly to me I am Thy infant child 122 It is many days since I have seen Thee I am unable to bear this longer Without Thee everywhere seems a desolate desert My soul is in distress 123 When I met Thee at Panchavati Thou hadst made up Thy mind to come here What wrong hast Thou seen in me that Thou hast delayed so? 124 O Rama, my body is aflame to see Thee O Dear One come now, why has Thy love suffered diminution? 125 I am Thy helpless and lowly one. My heart is fixed on Thy feet.

Why hast Thou become indifferent to me, that Thou no longer keepest me in mind? 126 Whether my service of Thee is true, or false, Thou, O God, dost know, for Thou art the knower of the heart"

As Rāmdas was thus pleading, the Husband of Sitā [Rāma] made Himself known 127 The Life-of-the-world, who takes a pride in His *bhaktas*, at that moment took a visible form, and embraced Ramdas with feelings of love 128 In order to fulfil the desire of Ramdās, Rāma entered into His image The promise which God [Purshottama] had made at Panchavati He now fulfilled

THE CEREMONY OF DEDICATING THE IDOL

129 In the meanwhile the Brahmans were worshipping the idol They bathed it with the five nectars [milk, curds, clarified butter honey and sugar] They mixed together saffron and musk and Rāmdās rubbed it over it. 130 They smeared it with many kinds of fragrant ointments Then they wiped Him all over with a cloth and dressed Him in the yellow robe 131 They put over him a garment woven with golden threads and on his head they placed a jewelled crown On his forehead they made the marks with musk paste and sprinkled him with fragrant powders. 132 In his ears were placed earrings of the shape of crocodiles and on his breast jewelled ornaments, which made Him look beautiful, and so dazzling as to compel one's eyes to close. 133. On His feet little bells were fastened On His wrist were placed some wrist ornaments. On His arms were bound jewelled arm ornaments Around His neck they hung a garland of flowers 134 The Husband-of-Jānakī [Rāma] was waved with wave offerings of incense, lights and the platter of lights. Outside of the precincts, there was the loud sounding instruments, and the *bhaktas* were shouting "Victory

Victory." 135. They brought vessels full of offerings, vegetables and fruits. The nine kinds of custards as it were the nine forms of *bhakti*, looked beautiful on the plates. 136. There were fried cakes, sugar puffs, wheaten cakes, layer cakes, short cakes, sweet cakes, macaroni fried puffs, and sweetmeats. 137. There were many preparations of fruits, and the delicious beautiful yellow curry. All these were offered to Rāma who ate to His satisfaction. 138. Rāma having washed His hands, there were placed before Him the *pānasupāri* and gifts. The *bhaktas* reverently circumambulated Him, and then made Him a *namaskāra*. 139. They now served the Brahmans with food, the same as the offerings they had made to the God. The foreheads of the Brahmans were marked with saffron paste, and holy water was given them to sip, and then the feast commenced. 140. As soon as it was night, a *kīrtana* was performed in the assembly hall. All listened with emotion to the blessed words of Rāmdās.

(*Abhangas* not translated)

141. Such were the blessed words uttered by Rāmdās in his *kīrtana*. By it the hearers were absorbed in the subject. The three-worlds seemed to be in the form of Rāma. 142. The whole sky was overflowing with the loud sound of the cymbals, and the sweet sounding drum. There was also the noise of clapping, and full of love the listeners wagged their heads. 143. Thus the *kīrtana* continued until the fourth watch of the night. Then at the rising of the sun the wave offerings were waved over the Husband-of-Jānakī, Rāma. 144. The listeners were all making frequent *namaskāras* to God and His *bhakta*. Every day Brahmans were feasted. Thus during the whole night there was the noise of the *kīrtana*. 145. The celebration continued for four days. On the fifth day the concluding dramatic entertainment was given. They put

Jānaki s Husband [Rāma] to bed and then the crowd of pilgrims broke up

146 The king took his leave of Rāmdas and went away with all his retinue Ramdās placed Kalyāna Gosāvi and Ākabāi in charge of (the image of) God. 147 When it was night Rāmdās sat alone by himself thinking of Māruti Immediately the Son of the Wind [Māruti] appeared and spoke to Rāmdās 148 and said I am well pleased with you Ask me for whatever boon you desire " Rāmdas said to himself The Merciful-One has understood my heart 149 The desire has arisen in me to install images of Thee So perform some miracle wherever they are installed 150 After listening to him Māruti said I will surely do so Your desire will be fulfilled. Then Ramdās made three images. Listen to the description of the appearance and form of the images 151 The image of Māruti in the posture of a slave and with hands joined together palm to palm he placed before the image of Rāma Then there was a terrible and hideous image in the heroic posture which was placed far to the back 152 Many different kinds of miracles take place there even yet One of beautiful design was placed at Shinganapura. By the mere looking at it *bhaktas* become victorious 153 When installing the image of Māruti there was a great celebration. The news having spread far and wide a great crowd of pilgrims assembled. 154 About a half mile in front of Rāma s temple Rāmdās erected a high pillar for lights The light illumined the face of the image of Rāma so that people everywhere could see it

155 The image of Māruti which stood before the image had behind it an image of Ganapati. In describing the good fame of Samartha the mind is overwhelmed

156 O Merciful to the lowly, Lord of Pandhari, cause me to continue the story of the saints. Apart from

Thee, there is no illuminator of the mind. 157. Thou ar both hearer and speaker. Thou art all the time enabling me to remember the stories. Mahipati is Thy dear child, an ignorant and foolish child.

158. *Swasti.* This book is the *Shri Santavijaya.* By the mere listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the God-loving *bhaktas* listen. This is the fifteenth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XVI

MAHIPATI S FONDNESS FOR THE SAINTS

1 There are some who visit sacred places Some perform religious rites But I care for no other method than that of listening to the stories of the saints 2 Some regard the nselves as ritualists worshipping a variety of deities But I have no liking for anything except the good things said about the saints. 3 Some force them selves to *Vajrasana* and contemplate *Brahma*. Some treat as mere dust their worldly affairs and wander in the forests. 4 Some becoming *Haridasas* proclaim the deeds of Hari in song Some have philosophic knowledge and are super men forgetting that they have bodies 5 Some devote themselves to good deeds Some turn their thoughts to duties prescribed and forbidden. But I like this easy way of relating with love the stories of the *bhaktas*

RITUAL IN THE WORSHIP OF AN IDOL

6 In the last chapter there was related the pilgrimage to Panchavati After which Samartha built a temple and installed the image 7 At the time also Samartha appointed Akābāī Venubai and Kalyāna Gosāvī to the service of the God 8 The glory of Ramdās increased greatly Men and women came to see and worship him Then Samartha planned to install the eleventh *avatāra* of Shiva [Māruti] 9 He had already installed a Māruti at Chāphala placed behind the image of Rāma and at some distance from it Let the wise listen with reverence to how he should be worshipped. 10 One who is a *Brahmachāri* [a man of chaste life] pure within and without should take oil and anoint him. 11 After that he should be bathed with water and then be smeared with red ochre and marked by the three upright lines made with mixed saffron and

sandal wood paste, also lovingly offered incense and lights 12 God is very fond of curd cakes, and therefore they should be offered to Him After sixteen days of such service, all one's longings will be fulfilled 13 All the disciples followed the methods of worship prescribed by Samartha. They made many kinds of vows, whereby their longings were fulfilled.

MAKER OF MOLTEN IMAGES BECOMES A DISCIPLE

14 There was a maker of molten images, who was devoting himself to the service of the *swami* When Samartha summoned him, he placed his head at Samartha's feet 15 Ramdas said to him, 'Take some gold, and make of it a molten image of Maruti.' He replied 'Give me a drawing of the form such as you may approve' 16 He brought a copper plate and Samartha made a drawing on it The artisan took gold, and making the image gave it to Samartha. 17 When Ramdas took it in his hand and looked at it he was full of joy Just then king Shivaji appeared, and made his loving *namaskara* to Ramdas 18 When he saw this little image of Maruti, he exclaimed '*Swami* How is its power shown ? Then Samartha composed two *shlokas* Listen to them, ye good and pious ones

(*Shlokas* not translated)

19 Having listened to Samartha's verses, he wrote them down, and committed them to memory He fastened the image to his arm and he immediately experienced its power 20 There were many of his other disciples who *fastened the image of Maruti on their arms* and this method which Samartha prescribed is still in vogue 21 Maruti is the son of the Lord of life When life leaves the body, it falls lifeless And therefore Rāmdas worshipped Maruti. 22 Samartha with his own hand installed twelve Marutis The first one was installed at Takali which you *saints have heard of already* 23 The next

one at Chāphala was placed before Shri Rāma, a beautiful one, and in the posture of a slave Behind him there was a statue of a horrible form. Māruti does not permit his *bhaktas* to fall into distress 24. And then, thirdly, Rāmdās installed a very large image of Balabhima [*Māruti*] at Shinganāpura. Let the saints listen with reverence to how he later installed the remaining eight images

INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT CHĀPHALA

25 *Samartha remained many days in Chāphala.* One day he suddenly arose and went into the forest. 26. The disciples and followers soon followed him. Then they *went into the town of Masura to beg their food.* 27. In company with his disciples he hurried from house to house, crying out, "Victory to the hero Rāma," and the pious people brought them food. 28 By begging in this particular way, Samartha was able to discern who were really *bhaktas* and who were not *bhaktas*, who were generous and who were miserly. 29. By this method of begging from town to town he tested the people. Only those who were worthy of *Final-Deliverance* did he initiate *into his* discipleship with the supreme-spiritual-riches (as the goal).

30. Seeing that the town of Masura was one inclined to *bhakti*, Samartha thought to himself, "I *must* install an image of Māruti there It will greatly redound to his glory. 31 So without anyone's knowing it, Samartha *went outside of the town,* and making a very beautiful image of Māruti, installed it by the bank of the Krishnā river [the village stream] 32. As soon as it was morning the company of his followers arrived there and found the Merciful-to-the-lowly [Rāmdās] repeating an *abhanga* in honour of Māruti.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

33 While he was repeating this *abhanga* the townspeople gathered there, and when they saw the image of

Māruti they were all delighted 34. Samartha had Māruti duly worshipped by the lips of the Brahmans. In the meantime a feast was being prepared, and many Brahmans assembled for it 35 Ākābāi then said to Samartha, 'Food has been prepared for only one hundred, but a thousand Brahmans have arrived. What shall I do?" 36 Samartha replied "Why should one trouble oneself about that? Māruti will supply all of them with food" Then the plates were arranged 37. Rāmdas worshipped the Brahmans, and gave all of them *pānsupari* and favours. Ramdās made the offerings to the gods, and Brahmans ate the offerings to the five vital airs 38 All had their appetites satisfied Rāmdās questioned Ākābai and she replied, "The food is as usual" 39 She then arranged plates for them all Shivaji the king sat down to eat, and there was a plate with offerings to Māruti. Rāmdas sat down before it 40 Thus all dined and at night a *kirtana* was performed Listen to Rāmdās' blessed words, you pious people

(*Abhanga* not translated)

41 While listening to Samartha s words, the listeners forgot all about their illusory worldly affairs, and everything took the form of Rama No one had the thought of 'Who am I?'

INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT MASURA

42 On the next day Ramdas started the building of a temple (at Masura) He remained in Masura for one month, and the work was completed up to the very pinnacle 43 The *Sadguru* then called one of his disciples, and said to him, "Perform daily the worship of Māruti, and give food to the hungry 44 During the day time go into the town begging for food, and every night perform *kirtanas*" Thus instructing his disciple, the *Svāmi* left for the forest 45 His company of disciples began go-

ing from town to town begging food, and daily having Brahmans dine with them. After which they read the book called *Dāsabodha*. 46. Thus they listened to thoughts on morals, on the good and the bad, from Samartha's own lips Thus time was spent usefully, and all were happy.

INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT SHAHĀPURA

47. One day Samartha rose early and came to Shahāpura He begged for food in the town. The people rushed after him to give it to him. 48 When it was night he withdrew alone to sing his praise of Māruti. And Māruti, seeing his loving *bhakti*, gave him a visual manifestation of Himself 49 Māruti gave him a promise with His own lips, "Whatever desire you may have, I will fulfil it, in order that your good fame may spread into the entire world" 50 Rāmdās then made this plea · "I have made the image with my own hands Thou, merciful one, enter into it" Māruti replied, "I will certainly do so" 51 As soon as it was daylight people began to assemble to see Rāmdās Seeing the image of Māruti, they were astonished, and all were delighted. 52 The Brahmans were then called, and it was decided to install the image Just then king Shivājī arrived in order to see and worship the *Svāmi* 53. The people of the town told the king of Samartha's remarkable doings, how during the night he had made the image The king heard this with delight

54 Preparations were made for gifts to Brahmans, and the cooking of the food for the feast proceeded. Rāmdas performed his bath, and then sat down to the loving task of worshipping the image of Māruti. 55. With various fragrant oils and the five nectars they bathed the image The Brahmans then bathed it with the recitation of Rudra and then wiped it with their upper flowing garments. 56.

Garments, adornments, and ornaments, saffron, musk and sandal-wood paste, were placed upon the image of Māruti, and the garland of flowers hung around his neck made him look beautiful 57 Incense, lights, camphor and the platter of lights were waved over him Offerings of various dainty foods were made to him Then lovingly making him a *namaskāra* they offered him handfuls of flowers, as prescribed in the *Vedas* 58 Ramdās then joined his hands palm to palm and repeated a verse of praise "Maruti is my life I have no nearer relative than Him. 59 Maruti is my mother Māruti is my father, my dearest friend, my brother, my uncle Aside from Him I have no other relative 60 Māruti is my supreme *sadguru* It was through Him that I met Rāma. It is through him that I have every joy and peace, and have not seen the illusions of this worldly existence"

61 After praising Maruti in this way, he lovingly prostrated himself on the ground. In the meantime the Brahmans seated themselves in lines, and were worshipped 62 Vegetables pickles and salt were served along with the daintily cooked food. Samartha made the offering to the gods, and the Brahmans sipped the water 63 Whatever pleased the taste of anyone this was served to him, and thus all had their appetites satisfied *Panasupāri* and favours were given them, and then the crowd sat down in lines to eat 64 The king sat down with them and all his retinue All the people of the town young and old, sat down with Samartha and ate with deepest reverence 65 After this a *Hari Kīrtana* was performed. Samartha took as his subject the *Sundarkanda* of the Ramayana, and all who listened were delighted. 66 As the sun was rising, offerings were waved over the Husband-of Sita [Rama] For carrying on the worship of this image of Māruti, Rāmdas appointed one of his disciples. 67. Finally the assembled crowd broke up, and the king re-

turned to Sātārā. Samartha then took his company of disciples with him and started for Umaraja.

INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT UMARAJA

68. When the people of Umaraja heard the news, they came out to welcome him accompanied with a musical band. All made a *namaskāra* to him, and then selected a place for him to lodge 69. Those who were wealthy among the pious ones brought a large quantity of the materials needed in cooking. All the disciples went into the town to beg for food, as large crowds of men assembled. 70. All the people then gave themselves up to listening to the *Hari Kirtana* and to worship The king came constantly to see and worship Rāmdās because of his great love for him

71. Many days having passed, Samartha performed a miracle at night He made a beautiful image of Māruti, which with the red ochre on it gave it extreme brilliancy. 72. It had a perfect form and was very pleasing to the *bhaktas* Before it Samartha sang about the character of Rāma. 73. When the sun arose, the townspeople came to see and worship, and lo! before the *svāmī* there was a very noble image of Māruti, to the astonishment of all.

74 *Samartha* said to Kalyāna, "Help the assembled multitude." The image of Māruti was then bathed and worshipped according to the usual custom. 75. Garments and ornaments were placed upon it, and the materials of worship were offered, such as incense, lights and other offerings Outside the temple there was the loud noise of the musical instruments and the "Victory! Victory!" cry of the *bhaktas.* 76 While this celebration was going on king Shivāji appeared. He made eleven *namskāras* to the *svāmī* in his love for him 77. While the worship of Māruti was going on Samartha uttered words of praise, and offerings were placed before the image of many forms

of daintily cooked food. 78. In the meantime Kalyāna Gosāvī was worshipping the Brahmans. He served them with delicious food, of which there was no lack. 79. Samartha made the offering to the gods with feelings of love, and the Brahmans ate the offering to the five vital airs.

The king then sat with citizens and Samartha to dine. 80. At night a *Hari Kīrtana* was performed, and the people remained awake for all the four watches of the night, while Rāma's noble character was being described with feelings of love. 81. Sweetmeats were offered as favours and the people returned to their homes. At the *Svāmī's* command the king also returned to his city (Sātārā). 82. Rāmdās placed there one of his disciples to conduct the worship of Maruti. Samartha then left and was followed by his multitude of disciples.

INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT BATTĪSA SHIRĀLE

83. As Rāmdās wandered from forest to forest he arrived at Battīsa Shirāle. He begged for food in the town and the people made their *namaskāra* to him. 84. During the day there was the reading of the Purānas and at night the *kīrtanas*. Listening to these services turned the people to worship. After some days had passed he made an image of Māruti. 85. Before this image Rāmdās lovingly performed a *kīrtana*. When the sun arose people assembled to worship. 86. They saw before them an image of a beautiful shape, and when people looked at it they were astonished, remarking, "One does not understand the activities of Samartha. 87. These are favourable times. Therefore Māruti has revealed Himself." The day for the installation was appointed, and preparations began. 88. After Samartha had finished his bath and morning prayer he sat down to worship Māruti. He invited Brahmans of very high rank who loudly repeated *mantras*. 89. Outside, the auspicious instruments were played. The image

of Māruti was bathed with the five nectars Lovingly the Rudra bath also took place Samartha himself made the fragrant paste 90 King Shivāji came bringing garments and a great variety of ornaments Samartha clothed the image with his own hands and made Māruti look very gay 91 Red ochre was rubbed all over His body Around His neck was hung a garland of flowers Incense lights and other offerings were offered The king placed his gifts before the image 92 Lights were lighted and waved before the image, while Rāmdās sang his praises The *shlokas* are blessed ones, and the saints should listen to them with reverence

(*Shlokas* not translated)

93 With hands joined palm to palm Rāmdas thus used words of praise Tears of love flowed from his eyes and the hearers were stirred with emotion. 94 There were offerings of flowers and the repeating of *mantras* The image was circumambulated with feelings of reverence Then bringing the offering of cooked food, they caused the Son of the Wind [Māruti] to partake. 95 In the meantime the feast was being prepared The Brahmans returned from their baths They were worshipped and then on their leaf plates dainty food was served 96 The appetites of all the Brahmans were satisfied, and they were given gifts and *pānasupāri*. Then Samartha, together with all his disciples, dined along with the king 97 Rāmdās performed a *kirtana* before the image of Maruti The learned as well as the pious, ignorant folk, sat down to listen. 98 Rāmdās repeated many *abhangas*, I will quote one of them Seekers after salvation, who listen to it, feel a sense of joy, and are confirmed in their right thinking

(*Abhangas* not translated)

99 Thus Samartha's *kirtana* incited all to worship. The sky was filled with the loud noise made in

repeating God's names, and the hearers lost all consciousness of body. 100. Four watches of the night passed in this way. The sun now arose, and after Samartha had sung hymns of praise, the sweetmeats were distributed. 101. The assembly then broke up. The king departed, taking the *svāmi's* leave. Māruti appeared in the form of His *Dāsa* (servant–Rāmdās) and as God (Himself) disciple for the salvation of all the world. 102. Rāmdās appointed a there to carry on worship and instructed him to turn every one into the Way of *Bhakti*. He then left for the forest, taking the multitude of his disciples with him.

INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT JARĀNDĀ

103. One day as Rāmdās wandered about he came to the town of Jarāndā. When the people heard he had come they were very glad. 104. Children and adults gathered together, and lovingly went out to welcome him. They prostrated themselves on the ground before him, and took him into the city. 105. With cymbals and drums the Haridāses performed their worship. The procession led by a loud sounding band conveyed Rāmdās to his lodgings. 106. The disciples then went into the town to beg for their food, but some people brought food directly to him. All were thus able to have food, and at night Rāmdās performed a *kirtana*. 107. When more than half the night was passed the audience returned to their homes. The God-loving *bhakta* then withdrew by himself and brought Māruti to his mind. 108. Samartha had made an image of Māruti, and into it the Son-of-the-Wind [Māruti] entered. It appeared a large beautifully formed image, and Rāmdās looked on it with delight 109. The citizens of the town arrived in the early morning to see it. As they saw the image of Māruti all rejoiced. 110. The astrologers were called and preparations were made for the crowd. Rāmdās lovingly bathed the image and duly worshipped it. 111. The God was bathed

with the five nectars, and anointed by the Brahmans. Appropriate *mantras* were recited, and all felt delight 112 Red ochre was rubbed over the image of Māruti, and lovingingly He was clothed and decorated Flowers incense, lights and the platter of lights were offered to it All the people shouted, "Victory! Victory!" 113. Samartha brought the offering of cooked food, and Māruti partook of it in private In the meantime the Brahmans returned from their bathing, and dainty food was served on their leaf-plates 114 After the Brahmans were worshipped, Samartha made the offering to the gods and the Brahmans sipped the water Then all dined. 115 All the disciples ate in the same line with their *Sadguru* When it became dark a *kirtana* was begun 116 Kalyāna Gosavi led the service, describing the deeds of the gods, during which half the night passed Samartha then arose to perform his part of the *kirtana*, and just then the king appeared. 117 He made eleven *namaskāras* to Ramdas and placed a garland of flowers around his neck. The king remaining standing, listening with reverence 118. As Rāmdas realized the wish of the people, he repeated an *abhanga* on a philosophic theme I quote it in this chapter just as he repeated it Listen to it with reverence

(*Abhanga* not translated)

119. "Through obscure philosophic teachings those who are inclined to the worldly life become crazy. Therefore one should worship directly the Saguna God By such worship, difficulties of the worldly life disappear 120 The Holder-of-the-Bow [Rāma] is the purifier of the sinner. By His Name a long line of *bhaktas* have been saved. His good deeds have become known in the three worlds His heroic acts are vividly described in the *Purānas*"

121 Such was the theme of *Samartha's kirtana*. After this he sang the praises of Māruti As soon as the sun arose, the lights were reverently waved over him.

122 After receiving the favour of sweetmeats the crowd of pilgrims broke up. When Rāmdās gave permission the king returned (to Sātārā) and he placed all his love on Ramdās' feet.

123 Samartha then called to one of his disciples and gave him the authority to perform the daily worship of Māruti, and charged him so to plan that the people may turn to the Way of *Bhakti* 124 Thus charging the disciple, Ramdās started to leave with his crowd of disciples Wandering about in the forest he came to the town of Tembhī

INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT TEMBHĪ

125 After begging their food in Tembhī they fed the Brahmans People came regularly to listen to the *kirtanas* and all gave themselves to worship 126 Many here received the initiatory *mantra*, both among the common people and the pious rich Ramdas, then sitting alone by himself, at night made an image of Maruti 127 It was characterized by its horrible form and its extraordinary size While Ramdās sat repeating his praises the sun arose 128 The people came to see and worship the *svāmi*, and seeing the image they were astonished They exclaimed, A time of prosperity has arrived" Arrangements were then made for its installation 129 The Brahmans were invited, cooks prepared the feast, sweet musical instruments gave out their sounds, and Samartha sat down to perform the worship 130 Then after the invocation there was the bath with the five nectars Then the dressing of the image in various garments, which to look at brought joy to the eyes 131 The whole of its body was rubbed with red ochre It looked radiant, like Rudra (Shiva) Himself Offerings of incense, lights, camphor and the platter of lights were made The audience made a *namaskāra*

132 In the meanwhile a crowd of Brahmans arrived The disciples of Rāmdās worshipped them. Leaf plates with delicious food were served which to look at brought delight to the eyes. 133 Samartha made the offering to the gods and all present feasted By gifts of *panasupari* and other gifts the Brahmans were made happy 134 The *svami* dined with his disciples in the very last line In the meantime preparations for the *kirtana* were made and seats were everywhere arranged 135 Bright lamps were lighted Cymbals drums and *vinas* began to sound The *svami* arose to perform the *kirtana* and all felt a sense of joy 136 There was the loud shouting of the name of God the sound of which filled the sky And now and again the whole audience joined in clapping their hands and snapping their fingers 137 Samartha took for his theme the noble characteristics of Shri Rama By this the hearts of his hearers were touched and they forgot the illusions of their earthly existence 138 While the *kirtana* was thus going on the sun arose Then waving the wave offerings over Shri Rama they distributed the final favours. 139 All the people returned to their homes. The *svami* then without taking leave of anyone, departed for the forest The disciples had to hunt for him.

INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI IN A MOUNTAIN VILLAGE

140 Samartha saw a village up in the mountain, and went up to it The disciples soon arrived and all worshipped him. 141 They took their begging bags and at once went into the town to beg food Samartha said to Akābāi 142 A Māruti has been installed at Tembhi Who shall be placed in charge of the worship there?" She lied Choose a disciple who belongs to that town and appoint him to the office 143 One who is of a pure and chaste character one who will worship with a sincere and worshipful spirit one whose power of speech is such that

when people hear him their hearts will become indifferent to worldly things 144 If you place such an one in charge many people will begin to worship Maruti. Listening to her advice, Samartha replied, 'It shall be done'

145 Ramdās then performed his bath, and began the worship of Māruti. In the meantime his disciples returned bringing the food they had begged The Brahmans were then invited to dine 146 The feast was being prepared Just then king Shivājī arrived to worship Rāmdās He made his *sadguru* a *namaskāra* and stood before him 147 When Samartha motioned to the king with his hand, the king sat down In the meantime the Brahmans took their baths and all sat opposite their leaf plates 148 The plates were served with the holy food obtained from begging and this they ate For the purification of their mouths the *tulasi* leaf was brought and distributed to every one 149 At the third watch there was the reading of the *Purāna*, and then the *Dasabodha* was read The substance of it was discussed in order to drive away the illusions of *Mayā* 150 When night came, and Samartha was by himself, he made another image of Maruti It was a huge image but according to artistic principles To look at it gave the soul a sense of rest 151 When it was dawn all the people of the town came to worship Rāmdas Samartha gave a command that every preparation for the installation should be made at once 152 that all the citizens including householders and priests in all the towns around should be invited and that the invitation should be extended as far as Shahapura They did as they were commanded 153 As the news of Samartha spread a great crowd of people assembled The loud sound of the musical instruments was now heard and the worship of the image began 154 A pavilion was erected and the red ochre-coloured banner of Maruti was raised The Brahmans repeated Vedic *mantras*, and the

image was bathed with the five nectars. 155. After the anointing of the image, (the red) *shendur* was rubbed over it. It was offered garments, ornaments and flowers, and with them it looked very beautiful. 156. Incense and lights were lovingly offered, and then the great offering of cooked food was presented. Samartha then sang the final songs of praise, and all offered handfuls offlowers.

157. In the meantime the Brahmans returned from their baths and were duly worshipped. The leaf-plates were then arranged and the food served. Samartha made the offering to the gods. 158. After that they sipped water, and the appetites of the Brahmans were fully satisfied. *Pānasupārī* and gifts were made to all and their hearts were gratified. 159. Along with the king his attendants dined in the same row as Samartha, and then the *kīrtana* was begun by Samartha. 160. He repeated many *abhangas*, but I shall quote only one that gives the substance of his teachings. If the pious walk according to it they will be saved.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

161. This *abhanga* of Samartha's is in itself a blessing to all. Samartha then told the story of Māruti as described in the *Sundarakānda* of the *Rāmāyana*.

162. As the *kīrtana* continued through the night the sun now arose, and both Māruti and Rāma were presented with the wave offerings very lovingly. 163. Roasted *harabarā* was distributed to all as the final favour. The king, taking leave of Samartha, returned and all the people returned to their homes. 164. Samartha appointed for the worship of Māruti a wise disciple, very God-loving, who was able to turn the people to the Way of *Bhakti*. He then hastened from that place.

165. Wandering through the forest as he willed, he came soon to Ūrnabāhu. Here he installed an image of

Māruti of tremendous size. 166. Rāmdās sang in *shlokas* here the story of Ūrnabāhu, which I quote with feelings of love. You pious ones, listen to it attentively.

(*Shlokas* not translated)

167. Such were the ten *shlokas* of Samartha, composed to describe the story of Ūrnabāhu. He repeated them with great love. Saints only are able to understand their meaning. 168. The evil-minded and deceptive Rāvana had kidnapped the good Sitā. To search for her Rāma journeyed to the South. 169. Bears and monkeys helped Him. They built a bridge over the sea, and He, having killed the ten-headed Rāvana, released the gods from their prison. 170. He made Bibhishana immortal, and gave him an everlasting kingdom over Lankā (Ceylon). Thus Rāma, being victorious, hastened back to Ayodhyā. 171. With Sitā and Lakshmana and with an army of one hundred and eighty billions of monkeys, He encamped on the bank of the Krishnā river for the purpose of bathing there. 172. Sitā encamped in a town called Shirāte. Near her was Rāma's brother, the victorious Lakshmana. Rāma, the Recliner on the serpent *shesha*, Himself was at that time bathing in the Krishnā. 173. The Holder-of-the-Bow [Rāma] made a Shiva-emblem out of sand, and placed it on a straw seat. Then worshipping it with all the usual rites, He sat contemplating it. 174. Everything to his mind became Shiva. He had no consciousness of Himself. Just then through a fall of rain on the earth a flood swept down the Krishnā river. 175. Both Rāma and Lakshmana were lost in contemplation. Māruti was standing close by, and exclaimed, "There will now be a disaster". 176. The flood came roaring on, and great waves were thrown up. Then Māruti put forward both hands, and stopped the flow of all the water. 177. Māruti stood in the middle, and the water was unable to force its way.

Then the water turned to the West sixteen miles back. 178. Māruti's power, which could not be withstood, made the Krishnā river form two forks, leaving an island in the middle, called by people Rāmlinga. 179. Rāma then performed a wonderful deed He saw a beautiful slab of stone, and drew on it the form of Māruti, just as He had seen him with his eyes 180. The Holder-of-the-Bow [Rāma] then placed it in the water, and in Lakshmana's ear uttered the following prophecy, 181 "In the Kali-yuga I shall have a *bhakta* by name of Ramdās. He will take this image out." Thus said the Lord-of-Ayodhyā

RĀMDĀS DISCOVERS THE ANTIQUE BAR-RELIEF OF MĀRUTI

182 In a former paragraph the installation of a Māruti at Ūrnabābu has been described. Without anyone knowing, Samartha left, 183. and He quickly arrived at the place where Shri Rama had erected a *linga*, and where the Krishnā had divided into two forks 184. There he suddenly remembered that Shri Rāma had with His own hands made a bar-relief of Maruti and had placed the image in the water of the Krishnā, and that he must certainly find it 185 Ramdās looked all around but Māruti was not to be seen His heart felt desolate and he cried out aloud, 186. "Quickly come to me, O Thou dearest of my life Brother-of-the-lowly, dear Māruti, without Thee my body seems all afire. Meet me quickly that the pain may cease 187. When Shri Rāma went to His heaven, He appointed you, Māruti, as His servant. Have you no recollection of this? And, therefore, you have made me hopeless?" 188 Hearing Rāmdās' words, pity was aroused in the Son-of-the-Wind "I will give you a meeting with me now," said a sudden voice from below. 189 "My heart is also impatient to greet you. Come down into the water, and I will meet you here" Rāmdās, hearing this

water, and I will meet you here" Rāmdās, hearing this voice, leaped into the water 190 There were many people by the bank of the Krishnā, and they sent up a distressed cry They exclaimed 'There is no limit to the depth of the water, and there are crocodiles and other water animals in it 191 Ramdās had leaped into the water of a deep hole, but no one had recognized him as one living in a certain place or town. 192 Just then some one said, he had recognized him and that he was the crazy Ramdās He had called aloud to Maruti, and then leaped into the water 193 Such was the conversation of the people on the bank Someone has lost his life needlessly," they said One remarked ' It must have been written in his Fate that he would die in this way 194 While the people on the bank were talking in this manner, his disciples arrived searching for him They heard the bad news and all were alarmed 195 They were in the same state as that of a young deer, abandoned by the mother deer With the hope of seeing their *sadguru* they looked in every direction 196 Then they remembered the past events, and sat down with a quiet mind and yet no one took food or water, because they were without their *sadguru*

197 In the meantime Ramdas was in the water seven days Māruti gave him a visual revelation of Himself, which gave Ramdas heart great joy 198. Shri Rama had formed in bar relief on the stone slab a Maruti. Ramdas took this image and came out of the Krishna river 199 As the people saw Samartha their hearts were filled with intense joy All cried out Victory, Victory All minds were filled with astonishment 200 The townspeople now exclaimed to one another There were fish and crocodiles in the deep hole of the river How was it he lived there for the seven days? The power of saints is most extraordinary 201 The disciples, when they

saw Samartha, fell at his feet All then bathed, and broke their fast

202 When half the night had passed, Ramdas sat by himself Suddenly Maruti appeared to him, and in the quietness revealed to him his secret thought 203 He said "Shri Rāma with his own hand sculptured this bar-relief on a stone You have brought it out of the water; and its form is imprinted on your heart 204 Now look at it, and make another one with your hand Install it here and this one replace in the water" 205 To this expressed wish of Maruti Rāmdas was agreeable and he made a very beautiful image, which was installed on the bank of the Krishna 206 Rāmdās then replaced the Māruti that Shri Rama had made in the deep hole in the Krishnā river. The new one was duly installed with the usual prescribed ceremonies

207 The news spread from town to town, and a great crowd assembled there The saints and *mahantas* performed a *kirtana* and the Brahmans repeated the *mantras* 208. Māruti was worshipped in all the prescribed ways Garments and ornaments were placed upon him Garland and sandalwood paste were placed on him Offerings and the final wave offerings were then made 209 The Brahmans were feasted and *pānasupāri* and gifts were distributed to all

The saints must give me their attention as I develop the next chapter 210 The stories of good men are supremely purifying, and in describing them there is intense joy in the heart. And so you pious ones being absorbed in these stories give me your attention 211 He, who is the Merciful-to-the-Lowly, Lotus-eyed is personally relating these stories of saints Mahipati is merely his instrument, and not an independent writer

212 *Swasti.* This book is the *Shri Santavijaya* By merely listening to it, it fulfils the longings of the heart. Let the God-loving, wise *bhaktas* listen therefore. This is the sixteenth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XVII

SAINTS ARE SENT FOR THE SALVATION OF THE WORLD

1 In order that the earth may have light, the sun rises in the East In order that the sky may be beautiful the moon appears in the heavens 2 In order to bear the weight of the earth the chief of serpents (Shesha) became an *avatara* In order that clouds may spread over the earth the oceans are filled to overflowing 3 In order to preserve the life of living creatures space is filled with air In order to warm the body and create digestive power the gastric heat burns in it brilliantly 4 In order that all the gods may have their appetites satisfied, immortality producing nectar [*amrita*] appeared in Heaven. So, in the *Kaliyuga* the saints have descended for the salvation of the world 5 As they have dwelt on the names of God in their songs, people have been saved by merely listening to them In order that men may worship and adore God they have installed idols that reveal His attributes. 6 In order to increase the happiness that comes from love God Himself became His own *bhakta* To the eye Rāma (God) and Dāsa (Rāmdas) are two names but the inner light is the same in both

THE INSTALLATION OF ELEVEN MARUTIS RECALLED

7 In the detailed descriptions of the last chapter it was related how Samartha made eleven Marutis with his own hands, and installed them 8 You saints have already listened to the various places where he installed them You may have forgotten them so I again repeat them Kindly listen. 9 Rāmdās installed an image at Tākli near Nāsik That first event of exceeding interest, you good people have attentively listened to 10 Aside

from this one Samartha installed eleven Mārutis in the valley of the Krishnā, *namely two images in the Chaphala* vale, wide awake and glorious. 11 At Singanapura one The third was installed at Masura and the fourth Maruti at Shahāpura The fifth was installed at Umaraja 12 The sixth Māruti was installed at Battisa Shirale, the seventh image at Jaranda, and the eigth at Tembhi 13 The ninth Māruti was placed up in the mountains at Navāgāva. The tenth at Urnabahu *under most extraordinary circumstances* 14 Ten images were thus installed, but the two in the Chaphala Vale made in all eleven Mārutis as is understood by all of Ramdas followers. 15 At the end of the list you have listened in detail to the story of Urnabahu To see that place is to enjoy the peace that comes from indifference-to-worldly things 16 Samartha chose to remain here many days Crowds gathered here to see and worship him with devotional hearts 17 Those who with strong desires made vows, Maruti fulfilled their longings The disciples [Ramdāsis] live there to serve him and carry on *the religious rites* 18 *If [Maruti] wishes to accept the* service (of the vow maker), good health is the result Otherwise the servitors have much bodily trouble, and, therefore, men with desire retire 19 In all these eleven places elaborate festival takes place in celebration of the birth of Māruti *Vaishnava bhaktas* perform *kirtanas* and crowds of Brahmans assemble

RĀMDĀS BECOMES A FOREIGN MISSIONARY

20 After performing these praiseworthy deeds, Samartha went to the sacred city of Kolhapura where he remained many days laying the foundations of faith and worship of God. 21 By means of *kirtanas* repetition of God s names and by the worship of Vishnu he turned men to that path And seeing Ramdas acting as he preached the all wise Brahmans gave him honour

22 From there [Krishnā Valley] Rāmdas continued southward in order to visit other countries, where the inhabitants were characterized by the two qualities, *rājasa* and *tāmasa* [activity and evil], and where there was not the slightest of the good 23 Theological truths and the worship of Vishnu were unknown to their ancestors, so that all were given over to immorality and gluttony, and no one knew the way to the supreme-spiritual-riches 24 If the name of Rāma fell on their ears those fools regarded it as supremely unpleasant. As Samartha watched those people, his mind filled with wonder. 25 There were those whose occupation was that of interpreting in two languages Samartha, therefore, said to them "Tell me how it is that they are irritated hearing the name of Rāma?' 26 They replied "If any one repeats the name of Rāma, it is considered as a bad omen for their domestic life It is the name repeated when one is at the point of death, and the moment it is repeated, death comes 27 Such is the teaching in this country, and therefore they dislike the name of Rāma." To this reply of the interpreter, Ramdās responded with an affirmation 28 'Only if I succeed in turning all to the worship of Rāma, am I to be called the *bhakta* of Rāma." He therefore remained there many days, and thoroughly learned their language 29 In their language he finally performed daily *kirtanas*, and so touched their hearts. Many became his disciples as they heard from his lips of the supreme-spiritual-riches 30 He told them of how that supremely wicked fisherman [Vālmiki] by repeating the syllables *ma-rā*, *ma-rā* [die, die] ended in saying Rāma Rāma. Through that event his fame has easily spread, and the Three-worlds [heaven, earth and hell] have not space enough to contain the love felt for him. 31 When Shiva drank the poison, his whole body was

on fire, but as Shiva (three eyed and with numerous eyes) pronounced the name of Rama his mind was eased 32 (Pingalā) the prostitute a very heap of sin, called to her parrot by name of Raghu [Rāma], and by that name attained to the land of Heaven This the *Purānas* loudly proclaim 33 'And, therefore I tell you, never forget the name of Rama Thus preaching to the people he turned them to the joy of the worship (of Rama)

RĀMDĀS RETURNS TO CHĀPHALA

34 When Samartha had finished his work there (in the Canarese country) he began his return journey Along the way, in the various villages, he showed his love in the performance of *kirtanas* 35 Just as the Ganges flows along its course purifying the towns along its banks and by the sight of her and by her touch, sin and suffering disappear and trees also are nourished without any effort of theirs 36 so saints anxious to help others, as they wander casually from country to country bring about the salvation of those who on this earth are indifferent to spiritual things How am I able to mention the very many who have done this? 37 And so Ramdas turned all that country to the worship [of Rama], and then gradually in the company of his followers returned to the Vale of Chaphala

RĀMDĀS WELCOMED BACK AND REVERENCED

38 Ramdās had previously appointed Kalyāna *svāmi* to perform the worship of Shri Rama (at Chaphala) As soon as he heard the news (of Ramdas' arrival) his heart was full of joy 39 All the citizens of the town went out to welcome him Musical instruments were played, and the air was filled with the joy of their love 40 As soon as they saw their *sadguru* they bowed prostrate on the ground Young and old embraced him and hung garlands

of flowers around his neck 41 Thus on that day, with music and acclaim, Samartha came to the temple of Rāma. As he looked on Shrī Rāma, his heart could not contain his love 42 Lovingly he bowed prostrate on the ground and with eyes full open he looked on the image Rāmdās embraced it with love The peace and joy of it I am unable fully to express. 43 He then again took a bath, and duly worshipped the image In the meantime a feast was being prepared. Just then king Shivājī arrived 44 When he saw the *sadguru* he bowed to him eleven times. The king, then clothing him in costly garments, adornments and ornaments, worshipped him 45 The feast was now ready and various daintily cooked dishes were served With joyful hearts all dined along with the *sadguru* 46 The *sadguru* took the *pānasupārī*, and then sitting on the throne gave his command to all that preparations should be made for the approaching festival 47 The gods desire to see the great festival of the birth of Rāma It should be performed here because Rama is near us here

THE FESTIVAL OF THE BIRTH OF RĀMA CELEBRATED

48 As they received this command the hearts of all were filled with joy The king stood before Rāmdās with hands joined palm to palm, and said 'I will bring the needed materials 49 Samartha replied to him 'According to the teachings of the scriptures the birthday of Rāma (*Navami*) is to be celebrated after begging contributions from many The wealth of one individual alone should not be expended on it. 50 Still if you have the desire to help, join your contribution with theirs As soon as Rāmdās gave him leave, the king hastened back to his place.

51 The followers of Rāmdās had assembled from many villages to welcome him These going back to their

homes began to make preparations for the festival 52. The temple of Rama was whitewashed and garnished. *Swastikas* and pictures were drawn on the floor (with coloured powders) A pandal was erected with banners, and the loud sounding music began 53 The disciples who had been sent out to beg for food brought back some Followers in the towns around sent various materials 54 The king sent very many sackfuls of materials accompanied by his secretaries and officials 55 The festival began to be celebrated on the first day of the bright half of Chaitra (April) On that day the musical instruments were played with the very greatest of enthusiasm 56 King Shivajī now arrived accompanied by all his ministers and army Many Pandits Brahmans and Vedic priests arrived also for the great celebration 57 Samartha bathed early in the morning and then worshipped Shrī Rama. Brahmans repeated Vedic *mantras* and the hearts of all were full of happiness 58 The Lord of Ayodhya [Rama] was bathed with a mixture of many fragrant oils, with saffron musk and *argaja* and with the five nectars 59 At the suggestion of the Brahmans the golden bath ceremony took place similar to that done at the *maharudra* ceremony Then they wiped the image with their upper flowing garments 60 They clothed the god in a yellow raiment and cloth with gold and silver threads of beautiful design and a shawl of eight strips to look upon which gives joy to the heart 61 On his forehead was placed the *tilaka* mark of saffron paste and smeared his person with a thin paste of the fragrant sandalwood A garland of flowers was placed around his neck and hero s bracelets on his arms 62 There was placed around his neck a string of pearls On his breast the jewel glittered On his feet were placed the *tanki* and *nepura* ornaments A vast amount of powders was thrown into the air 63 Plan-

tains, cocoanuts, custard apples, pomegranates, grapes, Rāmaphala, and the leaves and nut used in the *pānasupāri*, were all placed before the image 64 Many forms of tasty food, fried in butter, were prepared, and as an offering of cooked food there were numerous dainty dishes neatly arranged on the leaf plates. 65. The king placed before the image as a gift a handful of gold coins, the sight of which gave the (Brahman) worshipper much pleasure at the thought of his enrichment 66 There was the waving of the platter with lights over the image, the waving of incense, the burning of many lights from wicks of cotton around sticks, of five thread wicks and three thread wicks. These burning wicks were offered to the god, followed by an offering of food 67 The *bhaktas* shouted, "Victory, Victory ' The *kirtana* took place at the great entrance door of the temple Sweet music from many instruments was heard Samartha then intoned the final song of praise 68 The image was circumambulated with reverence and all offered handfuls of flowers And as all prostrated themselves before the Husband of Sitā [Rāma] they felt a sense of peace 69 Rāmdās then, with hands joined palm to palm, composed a hymn of praise, in which he pleaded for comfort with pity-arousing emotion. The saints must listen to it with reverence

(1) "O God, I have none but Thee So care Thou for me
(2) I am deficient in Indifference-to worldly-things' I abound in insincerity. Fatal doubts fill my mind.
(3) Right-thinking has deserted me, and knowledge has abandoned me But now my heart clings to Thy feet
(4) May I ever be repeating Thy names, for my heart places its confidence in Thee "

70 After this pleading cry Rāmdās made his *namaskāra* to the Husband of Sītā [Rāma] Just then the Brahmans returned from their baths and were seated in crowded lines 71 In company with his disciples Samartha worshipped the Brahmans seating them on the bathing board and washing the feet of all 72 The water with which their feet were washed was brought to the *sadguru* and he lovingly drank it For all sacred waters in the Three worlds are located at the Brahmans feet 73 Their foreheads were marked with the saffron paste The black spots from musk were also made on their foreheads and their persons were smeared with the thin paste made from sandalwood and an abundance of fragrant powders were used 74 Garlands of flowers were placed around their necks Incense lights and the platter of lights were waved over them Cymbals *tals* and bells were sounded and thus the wave offering was made to the Brahmans. 75 Leaf plates were spread for all The (king s) attendants did the serving For the fast day of the birthday celebration light food was prepared. 76 Many kinds of pickled fruit and vegetables were served on the leaf plates so also pickles and yellow custards 77 Delicate wheaten meal in milk mixed with large helpings of butter and sugar- and many kinds of fried *bhajis* were served on the leaf plates 78 Leaf cups full of curds milk ghee and *sara* were served Then Samartha made the offering to the gods saying that Shrī Rama was the enjoyer of food.

79 According as any one had a special taste that was brought and served on his leaf plate All had their appetites satisfied Then the mouth purifying course was served 80 The Brahmans with the *pānasupari* and gifts in their hands gave to Ramdas the rice over which *mantras* had been repeated saying May you worship the Lord-of Ayodhya the Husband of Sita [Rama] 81-

Knowledge is connected with Indifference to-worldly-things and Indifference to worldly things is marked by union with the spirit of worship To save the whole world you should become an *avatāra* at different ages" 82 Having uttered this blessing the Brahmans returned to their homes Large numbers of the common people came to see and worship Lord Rāma on His throne 83 After the Brahmans had dined those who partook of the light cooked meal sat and those who observed a strict fast ate fruit only all had their appetites satisfied 84 In the meantime the sun was setting and it was time for the final praise service The *bhaktas* could not contain their love for Rāma People hastened to see and worship Him 85 Outside skinned drums of various kinds were sounded Some blew wind instruments and horns while lights were everywhere being lighted 86 The place dazzled with light from the many lamps that had been lighted Clarions gave out their sweet sounds, There was no limit to the joy (of the people)

87 One acted as a mace-bearer and made the people stand in line on both sides of the way, and in front bards described Rāma s heroic deeds. 88 Using various kinds of flowers the Brahmans worshipped the gods Incense lights camphor and the platter of lights were waved over the Husband-of Sitā 89 The idol attendants drew a curtain before the idol and then made the offerings. The *bhaktas* at that moment stood outside, and shouted "Victory, Victory 90 After Rāma was satified with the sweet odour of the offering the curtain was removed immediately and sweetmeats were distributed to all, which His servants ate with joy 91 Thus the final praise service was held, and wave offerings waved over the Lord of Ayodhyā [Rāma].

Then when night came preparations were made for a procession of the idol 92 There were many banners

with the eagle design and with fish designs Some of the red ochre coloured flags were very large, and the picture of Māruti was drawn on them 93 The image of Rāma to be carried in procession was seated on a throne Some waved brushes and whisks before it To look at it gave joy to the eyes 94 In front of the procession there was the loud sound of musical instruments, and dancers sang sweet songs, cannons roared, and the *bhaktas* cried, 'Victory, Victory " 95 Rockets fire crackers, and other fireworks were let off every few feet, thereby the earth was lighted as brilliantly as with the rising sun 96 *In the front ranks the Haridasa sang, repeating the deeds* of Shri Rama All the gods sitting in their chariots of light, looked on with wonder, 97 saying Blessed is Rāmdas' love He has seduced the Good Being by his sincerity By giving us immortality, he has deceived us, for it seems that thereby we are separated from Shri Rama " 98 Thus in gay procession Rāma returned, and by that time there were but two hours of the night left Ramdās then began his *kirtana* 99 First his disciple rose one by one and described the deeds of Rama. There was no limit to their joy They brought into their *recitation* all the nine emotional sentiments

100 Thus the festival continued every day for eight days Twice the image was carried in procession, *and in singing the praise* of Hari the enthusiasm was extraordinary 101 On the morning of the birthday [*Navami*] all finished their *bathing and then* worshipped Shri Rama, and the praise service was held with tremendous enthusiasm 102 After that the Brahmans were worshipped Samartha himself performed the worship of their feet Fragrant pastes and oils were placed on them, and flowers were offered them 103 The favours of sweetmeats were distributed to young and old.

The sun had now been up for one watch, and Rāmdās began his *kirtana* 104 He repeated an *abhanga* as a prologue Listen while I quote it in this chapter Behind him stood his disciples, with accompanying instruments in their hands

(*abhanga* not translated)

105 While repeating this *abhanga* tears of joy flowed from his eyes And as the sound arose of those repeating aloud the names of Rama, the air was filled to overflowing 106 Recognizing the wish of every one, Samartha explained in detail the reason for the festival of the birth of Rama.

RĀMDĀS REPEATS THE STORY OF RĀMA

107 Rāmdās said to his hearers "Listen to my words Rāma is the unchangeable and the attributeless [*nirguna*], abounding in joy and for ever perfect Intelligence, 108 He became the advocate of His *bhaktas* through becoming *saguna* [with qualities] and taking a human form He performed many deeds worthy of being sung by the animate and inanimate '

109 Pulastya Muni was the son of a Brahman, a man of extreme austerities, and one of perfect knowledge. From him was born here on the earth Vishravā, a mine of right-thinking 110 From Vishravā was born through Kaikasi three sons Listen to their names 111 The monsters Rāvana and Kumbhakarna, haters of Brahmans and gods, and the third Bibhishana the servant of Vishnu, devoted to the love of worshipping God (*bhakti*) 112 The three by their extraordinary austerities gained the favour of the Lord of Heaven (*satyaloka*) who said to them "Ask the favour of a boon according to the desires in your hearts" 113 Hearing this voice of Brahmadeva, Rāvana at once asked as follows "I wish to conquer all the gods.

and become the lord of Three worlds [Heaven, Earth and Hell]. 114 Along with Indra I wish all the gods to be my servants I wish to possess the golden city, with sons, grandsons wealth and wives 115 My prosperity should last for fourteen of the four *yuga* period Brahmadeva hearing him replied "Your heart s wish will be fulfilled " 116 Then Brahmadeva [Begotten from the lotus] said to Kumbhakarna "You may also ask some special boon " Hearing this request the gods became very anxious saying to themselves that all was not going well 117 The gods then besought Sarasvatī to go and sit in Kumbhakarna's mouth, and prevent his asking for what may be to their harm 118. 'Surely I will' said the daughter of Brahmadeva Kumbhakarna then requested the king of *Satyaloka* [Brahmadeva's heaven] 'Give me a heavy sleep and thus enjoy bodily happiness 119 "Assuredly,' said the Lotus begotten one [Brahmadeva] All the gods then rejoiced After that Bibhīshana, chief of Vaishnavas asked for his special boon 120 "I wish to be a worshipper of Vishnu, and have my desires centred in God and Brahmans I wish to be repeating the names of God continually, and never forgetting to do so 121 Hearing this request of Bibhīshana s Brahmadeva was much pleased, and at once saying So it shall be , left for His abode 122 The granted boons immediately went into effect Ravana carried out his extraordinary deeds He captured Lankā (Ceylon) from Kubera and himself went to live there 123 He also conquered all the pious kings of the earth The ten headed monster [Ravana] was exceedingly greedy, and filled his treasure house with jewels 124 He had many sons and grandsons. Then being in possession of Brahmadeva s boon, he took with him a great army and attacked the city of the gods 125. In a tremendous battle he conquered the gods, bringing

with him the three hundred and thirty million gods [or 33 classes of gods] whom he imprisoned in Lankā (Ceylon) 126 Together with the nine planets he made the gods his servants and cows, Brahmans and Rishis were greatly harassed 127 The monsters who were obedient to the commands of the Ten necked monster [Rāvana] filled the earth with their arrogance. This occasioned the neglect of sacrifices and divine offerings, and unrighteousness greatly prevailed (over the earth) 128 Night-demons with great relish devoured cows, Brahmans and Rishis. Suffering through those evil beings the whole earth was in trouble 129 Then eighty eight thousand Rishis and the gods along with Indra and the earth in the form of a cow, arrived at the Heaven of Brahmadeva [*Satyaloka*] 130 Telling Brahmadeva all the news they besought His help ' Ravana intoxicated with pride has robbed us of our homes 131 Brahmadeva replied Let us go to my father, who is the founder of all religions. He will remove all your anxieties 132 Brahmadeva together with all who had come to Him went to the Ocean of milk and standing afar off on the shore of the ocean they shouted aloud Victory Victory 133 All joined their hands palm to palm and stood according to the prescribed rules and then with love in their hearts began to utter with their lips words of praise 134 ' Victory to Thee Enjoyer-of the-Ocean-of milk Husband of Lakshmi Supremely generous one Recliner-on the, serpent Shesha Unchangeable One Mine-of mercy Brother-of the-lowly 135 In obedience to Thy commands we were protecting our places of abode but Ravana, the pride-intoxicated monster has robbed us of all our homes 136 He devours cows and Brahmans. Unrighteousness has spread throughout the worlds Graciously look upon us Thereby the universe will be made

happy." 137. Having listened to this complaint, a voice *from the sky was heard:* "*I will* become an *avatāra* in the Sun-family-line, and will utterly destroy Rāvana. 138. All of you gods will appear in the guise of monkeys Shiva will become Māruti, and burn the city of Lankā. (Ceylon). 139. The Serpent Shesha (Vishnu's couch) will become Lakshamana the brother of Rāma. Vishnu's conchshell, *Pānchajanya*, will become Bharata, and His disk will become Shatrughna. 140. I, Rāma, Holder-of -the-bow, will be born to Dasharatha and Kausalyā, a voluntary *avatāra*, and will kill Rāvana in battle. 141. I shall *establish righteousness, and make cows and Brahmans* happy." As the crowd of gods listened to this voice, they were comforted.

142. Let us turn now to Ajapāla's son, a supremely powerful and holy king. He had no son, and therefore, was downhearted. 143. Then with great effort he brought to his place the Rishi Shringa. The king performed the birth-sacrifice. The sacrificial cake was provided and the sacrificial deity divided it. 144. The king had three wives: Kausalyā, Sumitrā and Kaikayā. As the *noble muni distributed the cake to the three wives,* he said: 145. "The moment you eat this, you will assuredly have beautiful sons." When Kaikayā heard this, she was very angry. 146. Said she: "I am the king's favourite wife. Why should I take the smaller piece? In the battle when the king went to help Shakra (Indra) I gave him complete victory." 147. Vashishtha heard of this prophecy, and *said to himself:* "Now look out for trouble." Just then a kite, flying in the air, swooped down and picked up the morsel that (Kaikayā had rejected). 148. Kaikayā then began to cry: "How now can I have a son?" Kausalyā immediately divided her piece in half, and put one piece in Kaikayā's hand. 149. So also the good

Sumitrā gave half of hers to Kaikayā. So all three became with child, and the king enquired about their fancies. 150. He who finds His happiness in the Ocean-of-milk, God-Supreme, Dweller in Heaven [*Vaikuntha*] suddenly revealed Himself to Kausalyā for the sake of aiding His *bhaktas*. 151. He whose name when repeated enables one to avoid the return of births and deaths, He, the Formless One, became caught in her womb. But that must be recognized as a wrong statement. 152. For Kausalyā was delivered without the slightest pain. Suddenly the Recliner-on-the-serpent-Shesha [Vishnu] appeared to her in her inner room. 153. On the ninth day of the bright half of *Chaitra* (April) at the second watch of the day, Kausalyā looked upon the ornament of the Sun family line (Rāma). 154. Peace, love, mercy and devotion were near Kausalyā as her close friends. They went and told Dasharatha that he had a son. 155. The king was very happy. Said he : "My good fortune is remarkable." He distributed sweetmeats from house to house, and musical instruments gave out their loud sound. 156. Just then other female servants came, and told the king that a son had been born to Sumitrā. The king rejoiced. Immediately after that still another female messenger arrived, and said : 157. "O king, to Kaikayā two beautiful sons have been born." On account of these births Brahmans assembled, and the king distributed unlimited gifts. 158. The king broke open his treasury of gold and jewels, and every beggar was given to his satisfaction. The city of Ayodhyā was decorated. 159. The whole city rejoiced. There were arches and banners at every house. Women taking red and yellow termeric powders started for the royal palace. 160. In whose toe the holiest of the holy Ganges has its rise, He, the Lord-of-the-earth, was being bathed on Kausalyā's feet. I regard that as very wonderful, indeed!

161 Vashishtha then said to the king "Look now on the face of your sons He then bathed himself with his clothes on [*sachaila*] and had (Dasharatha), the son of Aja do the same 162 The king took off his garments and ornaments and distributed all to the Brahmans The king then went into the inner chamber, and looked with love on his sons 163 Dasharatha, supremely fortunate looked directly with his own eyes on the Supreme Brahma And as the child was given a drop of honey, the Dark complexioned-one [Rama] was pleased 164 The child was so beautiful that ten million gods of love would lose their brightness before him Dasharatha mentally wished the child freedom from all evils, and bodily afflictions, and looked at him

165 Vashishtha *muni* then seated himself as customary, and explained Shri Rama s horoscope Said he 'This child is God-Supreme, Lord of-Lakshmi. He has descended as an *avatāra* to give peace to the world. 166 He will kill Ravana and Kumbhakarna, and free the gods from their prison He will establish righteousness on the earth, and protect his *bhaktas* 167. For eleven thousand years he and his descendants will rule, and then finally he will take the whole city of Ayodhya to Heaven.' 168 To this prophecy of the son of Bramhadeva the king replied 'My good fortune is blessed.' After twelve days they named the child. 169 They put into His cradle Him who is the Supreme *Brahma*, untouched by *Māyā* As they swung the cradle to the sound of 'jo jo', they gave Him the name of Raghunatha [Rama] 170 The jewel in Sumitrā's heart they named Lakshamana The two sons of Kaikeyi were named Bharata and Shatrughna.

171 These four sons of Dasharatha gradually attained maturity. They all seemed as brilliant as the moon in the bright half of the month 172 In Rama's descent

as *avatāra* the earth rejoiced exceedingly All men who were ill formed or ugly became beautiful 173 Old people looked young The poor became rich Rain fell in unlimited amount, fresh grass sprang up in the hot season. 174 Cows on the earth that gave little milk became wish-cows, supplying abundant milk. Care and poverty fled far away from the world 175 The ignorant became wise The careworn became comforted. Such feelings as enmity never entered into His subjects' minds, even in their dreams 176 The music of *kirtanas* was heard from house to house Men and women all became devout The undevout, haters and evil doers were not to be seen anywhere on the earth.

RĀMDĀS CLOSES THE FESTIVAL OF RĀMA

177 Mahipati requests his hearers to remember what has been previously related. It was in that way that Rāmdās lovingly described the birth of Rāma 178 Samartha preached to his hearers 'What do you or I lack? The formless one became one with form in order to protect his *bhaktas*' 179 After his sermon there followed the clapping of hands and the shouts of 'Victory, victory These waves of sounds in the *kirtana* in the shouting of God's names made space resound with their loud sounds. 180 Samartha then sang the hymns of praise and waved offerings over the Lord of Ayodhyā While the hymns of praise were being sung the Vaishnava *bhaktas* danced, full of love 181 The enthusiasm was limitless No one could remember what of home or property belonged to them As the king listened to the *kirtana* he lost bodily consciousness Such was the performance of the *kirtana* 182. People bowed prostrate before Rāma. Sweetmeats were distributed to all Then all returned to their homes 183 The festival lasted nine days and nine nights. On the tenth day Samartha broke the fast and many *forms* of

dainty food were served to the Brahmans. 184. This divine food, exceedingly special, even the gods desired to eat, and exclaimed: "*Blessed, blessed are human beings whose trust is in Shrī Rāma.*" 185. After the Brahmans had eaten, Samartha with his own hands distributed the *pānasupārī* and gifts. And then the others sat down immediately to eat. 186. The king, in company with the disciples, sat down to eat in the same line as their *sadguru*. After the first watch of the night they began the dramatic presentation of the theme of Rāma's birth. 187. Samartha requested Kalyāna to act the play himself. He then stood before the image of Rāma, and lovingly sang His praise. 188. He acted perfectly and repeated the *abhangas* of Samartha, *containing personal and theoretical truths*, which the wise received by experience. 189. The ignorant laugh at outward truths, but the wise soon become absorbed in their meanings. Rāma's *bhakta* then said to Him: "We have kept you awake for a long time." *190.* They then made a platter full of *pānasupārī* and placed it before Rāma. They threw into the air much red and fragrant powders, and the people shouted: "Victory, Victory." 191. Cloth was spread for God to walk upon and some waved before Him brushes of peacock's feathers and whisks. Men and women stood on both sides of the way and Māruti stood before Him. 192. The dramatic representation took place in this way, and then they put the Lord-of-Ayodhyā to sleep.

The saints have appointed Mahipati to worship at Rāma's feet. *193. Swasti. This book is the Shri Santavijaya*; by the mere hearing of it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the God-loving, and good *bhaktas* listen. This is the seventeenth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MARVEL OF RĀMA'S INCARNATION

1. (As already told) the Merciful-One-to-the-lowly (Rāma) brought to Ayodhyā the life existing in Heaven. What were mere pebbles of the fields became at once touchstones (stones that turn iron to gold). 2. Shrī Rāma is my World-guru, an *avatāra* with voluntarily assumed human body. All the trees of Ayodhyā became wish-trees (trees that grant every wish). 3 Birth as a human being is a source of happiness, but births, deaths and poverty interfere with this joy. Rāma drove out of the land these interferences This praiseworthy deed of Rāma is known everywhere. 4. So long as Shrī Rāma was ruling, all creatures lived in mutual friendship. No one reviled or hated. The world seemed in the very form of Rāma. 5. Blessed, blessed was the good Kausalyā-- The Lord-of-the-three-worlds (Vishnu) entered her womb. She became one without bodily consciousness and the Three-worlds seemed to her in the form of Rāma. 6. Kausalyā placed in the cradle Him whose couch is the Serpent Shesha [Vishnu]. With smiling face the mother sang to Him, which brought happiness to dear Rāma. 7. He, whose abode is on the ocean-of-milk, which is the Lord of all oceans, even He begged of Kausalyā to be nursed at her breast. This seems very wonderful to me. 8. He who (Lotus-begotten) is the father of Brahmadeva, and the family deity of Shiva (Blue throated), even He called Dasharatha His father and asked him to take Him on his lap

RĀMDĀS DRIVES AWAY DEMONS

9 In the last chapter it was related how Samartha performed a *kirtana* on the ninth day of the Rāma-Navamī

festival and how he related the contents of the Birth-chapter (of the *Rāmāyana*) 10 On the tenth day in the presence of a great crowd, at night, a dramatic re presentation took place. Then after receiving the final favours, the whole multitude dispersed to their homes

11. Samartha then went up into a mountain and there sat down Then accompanied with the music of a tambourine, he composed an *abhanga*.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

12 Thus Samartha sang on the mountain top in the fulness of his joy The crowd saw him and heard him

13 It now happened that women, Shudras and the young and adults among the crowd that had gathered were attacked by chills, fever, and vomiting [Cholera morbus] 14. As to how this happened, the listeners will bring to mind what was told before, that Ramdas had obliterated a burial-ground, and had there installed an image of Rāma 15 All the devils, who occupied this cemetery, fled when they saw Samartha. All their power vanished before that of Samartha 16 Now all these demons were stirred to anger, and began to trouble the assembled crowd of people Fever, dysentery, vomiting took place [Cholera] and the people s condition became serious 17 Rāmdas heard of this and called *Vetāla* (king of devils) to come to him Ramdas said to him 'Your army is giving trouble to the assembled crowd They must be punished 18 Hearing Samartha s declaration, *Vetala* (king of devils) joined his hands palm to plam and said "Your command is my authority He then called away all his demons 19 Vetala said 'Be gone at once from here If Maruti should hear that you are troubling these crowds, he would bind you all to his tail 20 At this order of *Vetāla s* all the demons deserted the place and fled away The whole crowd recover ed their health and were able to return to their homes.

21. Various kinds of devils were there in great numbers, and therefore Rāmdās was very angry with them, accusing them of giving his people trouble 22 The water nymphs who lived on the river banks, they also fled precipitously Black female-deities and the wild female deities and the fierce-female-deities all ran away. 23. Female ghosts, and female lustful demons, fled out of fear of Māruti The buffalo-demon had to wander from jungle to jungle to find a place to dwell in. 24 Other ghosts also of many kinds, the long list of whose names would be too long to record, as soon as they received the command of *Vetāla* (king of devils), abandoned all hope of returning there 25 The female demons that give the pains to women in child birth, they also fled away precipitously. *Vetula* (king of devils) searched with his eyes the place of his abode, but to the very end he could see none of the devils

26 After *Vetala* (king of devils) had given his order, he went to Kailasa [Shiva's Heaven] There he bowed to the Husband of Pārvatī [Shiva] and worshipped that king of Yogis 27 Shiva said to the King of the devils "Why did you go, to the land of the mortals? What unusual events occurred there? Tell me at once." 28 Thus requested by Shiva, the king of-demons replied - "The noble Vaishnava Rāmdās is there. He has undertaken to save the world 29 In the Vale of Chāphala he has installed the images of Rāma He has been celebrating the festival of the birth of Rāma, and a great crowd gathered there. 30 There was formerly a cemetery there, and therefore the gathered crowd of people became possessed by the devils Rāmdās then summoned me, and put fear in my heart 31 He said - 'If you do not take away your army of devils, Māruti will be angry with you. I therefore freed the place of devils.'" Hearing

this, Shiva laughed heartily 32. Said he "Maruti is my *avatāra*, and he himself, in a certain portion of him, has become Rāmdas So, there is no difference whatever between us two in the matter of thought and feeling 33. Shri Rāma is the deity I worship This you must surely have heard. It is really I, therefore, who have become Rāmdās for the salvation of the world in this *Kaliyuga*" 34 As the Enemy-of-Cupid [Shiva] thus spoke, *Vetāla* (King of devils) was astonished and said "If I had not taken away my devils, they would certainly have met with disaster."

RĀMDĀS DRIVES AWAY INFERIOR GODS

35. Turning now to Samartha, He summoned to him the inferior gods, and said to them 'If you are planning to trouble the assembled people, then quickly get out of here 36 If you will not listen to my order, Māruti will lash your bare backs with his tail" Hearing this, they became full of fear, and precipitously fled. 37. Evil spirits such as *māvlyā*, *Munja* and *Birdeva*, and the *Utchhishta Chāndāli* and *Bhairava*, left the place, and began to hunt for another town to live in. 38 Thus the inferior deities and ghosts left, but the Buffalo-Demon [*Mahishāsura*] would not go He stood before Samartha with hands joined palm to palm Said he "I will remain by the pillar for lamps 39 I will do no one any harm I will merely feast my eyes on the assembled crowds" So saying, he bowed to Samartha from a distance. 40 "When the chariot bearing the God passes this place, let a cocoanut be given me I shall truly ask for nothing more than this' Samartha heard him and replied "So be it"

41. Kalyāna Gosavi asked Rāmdas why he had removed the images of the inferior deities. Hearing him, the *sadguru* replied "They cause men to kill. 42. Men

of evil disposition and ungodly character make various vows to these inferior deities, and that their desires may be fulfilled they offer them animal sacrifices 43 These evil causes at once produce the reason for their going to Hell. Therefore, men should worship Shri Rāma with love instead 44 Blessed are those Vaishnava *bhaktas* whose family deity from past time has been Shri Rāma. Thereby they themselves are saved, and they save others also 45 Those whose heart is fixed on the name of Rāma do not care for these trumpery deities. They do not care for *mantras* and *tantras*, or rules and rituals. They care for nothing else whatever, but Rāma's name. 46 He whose *jap* [Repetition of Names] is the repetition of Rāma's name, he whose severe austerities are only the repetition of Rāma's name, he who besides repeating Rāma's name makes no other effort, 47 he who obtains joy by the name of Rāma, he who gains the highest form of salvation [*sāyujya*] by the name of Rāma such an one cares not about scripture teachings, aside from the name of Rāma 48 He to whom all forms of sacrifices are Rāma Himself to whom the name of Rāma is his wealth and utmost desire to whom the four great purposes of human existence are only Rāma such an one has no other love but Rāma 49 He to whom Rāma is his supporter and adviser and his very thought, he to whom Rāma is the beginning and the end of all, such an one should be considered as being Rāma Himself, His human appearance is illusory' 50 Hearing these words of Samartha the people, (*abhanga* not translated) made him a *namaskāra*. Those alone whose minds were fitted for devotion accepted his teachings

RĀMDĀS ASSIGNS DUTIES TO SHIVĀJI'S ATTENDANTS

51. Samartha called the King's attendants to him on the mountain and instructed them that they should per-

form the duties for which they were especially fitted 52 "When the festival of Rāmnavami [Birth of Rāma] is near, let all of you come some days earlier. And each should perform the duties assigned to him " 53 Samartha assigned to each one such work as he was fitted for At the time of the Rāmnavami festival they came joyfully, and performed their duties with delight 54 If you ask what these duties were, they were such as smearing the walls of the temple, or whitewashing the temple, or drawing pictures on them. 55 There were some skilled women cooks who were assigned to making spiced cakes and macaroni. Some of the female cooks who were of special pious character were appointed to duties requiring holiness 56 Some had the happy task of caring for the lamps and making them polished and bright Some were appointed to the joyous act of worshipping Brahmans to be performed with the utmost pleasure 57 Some were placed over the store room, and others to bring materials from there Some were to be mace-bearers and stand guard before the God 58 When the palanquin with the God was to be carried, some were appointed to be the bearers in front and others at the back Samartha also appointed those who were to wave the brushes and fly whisks. 59 Some were appointed for making the fragrant saffron and black pastes and some for marking with powders Some were appointed to look after the diners 60 Some were to provide various kinds of seats for those at the *kirtanas* Some were to be ready to give water immediately to those of the crowd who were thirsty 61 Some were appointed as waiters who would know the secret wish of every diner, and serve on his leaf plate at once what was not already there 62 All those attendants (of the king) to whom Samartha appointed these duties were to come every year, and gladly perform them 63 All those whom Rāmdas thus appointed, they accepted his commands and

made him a *namaskāra*. To this very day the descendants of these perform these very duties

MĀRUTI'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED

64. Now when it was full moon Samartha celebrated the birthday of Hanumāna [Māruti] King Shivāji came bringing much material, and all were rejoiced in heart 65 Samartha bathed at the time of full moon, and then began the worship of Māruti Auspicious instruments of music gave out their loud sounds that resounded through the heavens 66 The Brahmans repeated the Vedic *mantras* Fragrant oils were rubbed on the God His image was bathed with the five nectars and then he was anointed with oil 67 Red ochre was rubbed on it, and garments, ornaments neck jewels and garlands of flowers were hung on its neck. He was offered incense and lights. 68 *Pānasupārī*, gifts of money and offerings of cooked food were placed before it and thus this Son-of-the-Wind [Māruti] was made pleased 69 The final hymn of praise was sung to the accompaniment of the shouts of "Victory, Victory!" Outside there was the loud sound of musical instruments. Then the Brahmans were feasted in long lines, and all had their appetites satisfied 70 Samartha then began to perform his *kirtana*. Men sat down in reverence to listen The king was absorbed in the scene and watched the form of his *sadguru*. 71 Just then Samartha gave a loud cry in repeating the name of Māruti, and there was loving clapping of the hands, and sound of all this echoed far off 72 Rāmdās then said to his hearers 'I will tell you what is the best means (of salvation) It is to trust in God's name. 73 While one at his usual occupation is repeating the names of God, he is to be considered as one who is contemplating God. While one with every morsel of food repeats the names of God, he is to be regarded as equivalent to one who fasts 74 While repeating the

names of God by day and night, the seeker after final deliverance finds his character at once changed He finds peace of mind and indifference to worldly things enter into him, and the illusions of *Māyā* are driven away 75 If anyone has experience of the effect of repeating Shri Rama's name, it is the Lord of Kailasa [Shiva] That same Shiva later became Maruti in order to worship Rama'

76 Hearing these words of Samartha's, king Shivāji joined his hands together palm to palm, and asked him to tell what purpose Shiva had in taking the form of a monkey 77. It also seemed the wish of all present to listen to the details of the story from beginning to end. The Sadguru related the story as follows —

(The long Puranic story of Maruti's birth in verse 78 to 143 is not translated)

144. Thus Samartha related the story of Maruti-Camphor lamps were lighted and waved around the Son of the Wind [Maruti] 145 Sweetmeats were distributed to all present Baths were taken and Maruti was worshipped. Brahmans daily dined on daintily cooked food, and Samartha performed *kirtanas*

RĀMDĀS IN VARIOUS PLACES AT THE SAME TIME

146 In this way Samartha celebrated the birth of Māruti in eleven villages at the same time, and appearing in a different form in each place 147 Every one thought that Ramdas had stayed in his town for a few days and carried the celebration to completion

148 In the meantime the Brahmans returned to the Vale of Chaphala with the gifts they had received Seeing Samartha there, performing the worship of Shri Rāma, they were amazed 149 One remarked 'Samartha was for four days at Shahapura How is it he has come here so quickly ? To their minds it was an astonishing act

150 Another said "We were at Jarāndā for five days; Ramdas led in the celebration there, and distributed these gifts to all present' 151 A third said- "Last night I was at Singanapura, and I saw him there You may say that that is a false statement, but there are very many witnesses to this among the citizens of the town." 152 Then one from Urnabāhu spoke up "A great crowd had assembled there, and Samartha led in the celebration there. This is absolutely not an untruth"

153 This led a disciple to go to the temple and ask the *Swāmi*, for, said he 'I was at Battisashirāle along with you" 154 Being thus asked by his disciple, Samartha laughed to himself, and then replied "God's acts are seemingly impossible One cannot fathom them by searching 155 In stealing away the calves Krishna made Brahmadeva crazy Then the Life-of the-world [Krishna] became calves cows and herdsman, and appeared in two places at the same time 156 The Life-of the-World became fife, flute and shoes. As Brahmadeva looked at Him, he saw nothing lacking in each, and lovingly worshipped him 157 In order to make Brahmadeva crazy, the Lord-of all became both cows and calves. He, therefore, experiences no difficulty in assuming my form" 158 Saying this to his disciple, Rāmdās, composed an *abhanga*. I quote it in this chapter and ask you to listen attentively to it

(*Abhanga* not translated)

159 As all listened to these words of Samartha, they made him a *namaskāra*, remarking "O *Sadguru*, neither Brahmadeva nor Shiva can comprehend the limits of your abilities 160 After some days had passed a Brahman came from Tākali, and reported that Samartha had led in the Māruti celebration in that place. 161 "The *Swāmi* is intending to leave there this very day" At this

Kalyāna Gosāvī laughed, saying: "The *Svāmī* is in the temple at this very moment. 162. If you call *this false*, the *Svāmī* is right here in this town." Here Ākābāī remarked: "Evidently your misconceptions have *not left* you. 163. When the Lord Sadguru [Rāmdās] voluntarily became an *avatāra*, His *seemingly impossible* deeds are done everywhere, constantly, and seen by all. 164. *So Ambājīpanta* [*Kalyāna Gosāvī*], *before the sight of* every one, was for seven days under water in the well. Then at Samartha's call he at once came out. 165. While Samartha in childish mood was playing (with boys), he was wounded accidentally by a batted *viṭī* [short thick piece of sharpened wood] The boys then buried him in the sand. Seven days passed. 166. The townspeople then dug into the sand to find him, when he suddenly came out, and ran away. He has no difficulty in assuming a similar form in twelve different places (at the same time). 167. At the time of the Krishna *avatāra* he at the same moment was married to sixteen thousand wives. Dvaipāyana relates that Shrī Krishna was in as many places at the same time. 168. As God is, so is His servant. Hence his deeds are the seemingly impossible. Through the power of Vishnu's *Māyā* special deeds are performed." 169. As people listened to the remarks of Ākābāī, all were moved with astonishment, and declared. "There is no limit to what Samartha can do. One should not fall into vain doubts. 170. How he performs these deeds cannot be asked of any one" Rāmdās then repeated an *abhanga*. The saints should listen to it with reverence.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

171. As people listened to this *abhanga* the doubts of all disappeared. They remarked to one another: "We cannot comprehend the limits of our *Sadguru's* power."

EULOGY OF RĀMDĀS AND HIS DISCIPLES

172. After the feasting was over, the reading of the *Purānas* was begun. Then the *Dāsbodha* was read with its special reference to what was philosophically true and untrue.

173. All the saints had assembled for the celebration of Māruti's birthday. I will relate all their names. Listen. 174. There was Jairāma Gosāvi of Vadgāva, a most distinguished *bhakta* and a worshipper of Krishna. Then there was Rangā Gosāvī of Nigadi. He was a man of unlimited knowledge. 175. Vāmana Gosāvi, a clever Pandits, whose vast composition of *shlokas* was most extraordinary. Then there was Muni Gosāvi, a great saint, of a peaceful mind, and ever indifferent to worldly things. 176. Such were the saints that sat in the assembly. The king was there with his ministers. Also Brahmans who were Vedic panditas, expert scholars of Vedānta books. 177. In this distinguished assembly Samartha shone like the moon in the midst of all the stars, a beautiful statue of light. 178. As Shiva among the yogis, or as the sun in the heavens, as one learned in the Vedas among common panditas, in oratory prominent over all; 179. so Rāmdās was looked upon as to his superiority by all the *bhaktas*. He discussed philosophic questions of truth and untruth, yet without pride or hate.

180. The supremely wise Akābāi read from books. Some of the learned pandits asked her regarding their doubts. 181. She replied: "The many *rishis* have had different opinions. Hence they have approved of the three ways, Deeds, Worship and Knowledge. Thus the Vedas have taught these three ways." Samartha then repeated an *abhanga*.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

182. As all listened to these words of Samartha, the wise among them arrived at a true understanding and exclaimed: "Blessed is this happy day. All our minds have had their doubts removed." 183. After Samartha had finished with the reading of the *Purāna* he distributed sweetmeats to all. Just then a most remarkable occurrence took place. Listen, you pious people.

RĀMDĀS SETTLES THE QUARREL OF POETS

184. A large number of poets had gathered there, and were quarreling among themselves. The king's doorkeepers would not let them enter the building. 185. Rāmdās asked them the reason of the commotion outside. They replied: "A band of poets, quarreling among themselves, have come to meet you." 186. The pandits then asked Samartha what he thought about it. Rāmdās replied to them: "Everything is a combination of the three *gunas* [goodness, activity, and evil]. 187. The *Purānas* insist that the Vedas are made of the three *gunas* only. All the Shastras are composed of the three *gunas*; so also are all the interesting stories of the gods. 188. In this world which God has created, each of the *gunas* has a presiding poet. Listen to their names, that no doubts may remain in your minds. 189. The Bold poet [original composer] is a poet by nature. In him the *tamoguna* [evil *guna*] is prominent. The Repeating Poet, who is truly of the active *guna* [*rajoguna*], is clever in inventing similes and recording histories. 190. Those who belong to the *satvaguna* [Goodness] are the saints. Through their blessed inspired poetry they sing to God in appealing words. Through such poetry the Lord is pleased." 191. The Bold, the Repeating and the Blessed poets have each their respective characteristics. As Samartha explained this, all felt gratified.

192. Samartha then said to the king: "Let these poets come in. The saints here will listen for a moment or two to what their opinion may be. 193. At this command of Samartha's, the ignorant felt very happy. There were many of the *tamoguna* kind, who remarked,: "Let us now see some fun" 194. Having been called in, the whole band of poets came near Rāmdās. The tambourines sounded loud, and filled the air with their noise. 195. Just as the bulls on *Polā* festival are fancily dressed, so these poets (Shāhira) were dressed up. They had red shawls thrown over them, and seen from behind they were gaily adorned. 196. Their turbans were of a saffron colour and as they came in they were chewing the *pāna-supārī*. They had upright marks on their foreheads, and they walked in an impudent way. 197. They had rubbed ashes on their eyes and held little tambourines in their hands. They had planted banners, and were violently beating their cymbals. 198. Seeing them, the saints and the chief saint began to laugh, exclaiming. "It must be Rāma, who is acting in them. Perhaps it is divinity seen because it is pervading them."

199 The poets came in, and bowed prostrate before Samartha. They bowed to the king, and said as follows: 200. "We have been quarreling among ourselves since the month of Phālguna (March). Let the king decide between us. Otherwise we shall be compelled to remain here. 201. Continuing our search from place to place we have come here to Samartha. Listen now to our poetic compositions, and give the praise to the best." 202. The *Sadguru* said to the king: "Why do you not decide between them? They are in trouble, because of pride, so cause them to enjoy the happiness that comes from a peaceful mind". 203. The king replied: "My dear *Sadguru*, there is no cure for the evil principle [*tamoguna*]. You

therefore judge between them, explaining to them the blessing of the supreme-spiritual-riches. 204. One may place a stone in a pool of water in order to soak it, but it will not be soaked at all. But apply a chisel *to it, and it* becomes a god. Deal with them in that way, O Samartha." 205. Rāmdās *then said to the poets:* "Let *me hear what* wisdom you have. Sing what you have composed". They *listened to this invitation* with joy. 206. *They* came forward twisting their moustaches, and thrumming their tambourines, singing the praises of Ganapati, vying with one another, and comparing themselves with one another. 207. Both parties were completely subject to the evil principle [*tamoguna*], and no one seemed to be victorious over the other. So Samartha motioned with his hand, and caused them to cease. 208. He said: "Your singing seems to me to be equal. Your knowledge seems equal, but you must give up the evil feelings of pride." 209. The poets replied to Samartha: "You should give to one at least a written statement of superiority. Instead of that you have praised both alike. That is not justice." 210. Samartha said to them: "I will sing a song accompanied with a tambourine. He who correctly replies *to it* will be *considered as superior.*" 211. *So* Rāmdās said to Kalyāna: "Take a tambourine in your hands." *and with two other disciples they began to sing heartily.* 212. The whole assembly looked intently at Samartha. The king and his *ministers, in full enjoyment, listened* with delight.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

213. As the poets listened to Samartha's verses, they lost their pride. They prostrated themselves before Rāmdās, and exclaimed: "We are conquered by your verses." 214. Rāmdās then gave these poets *pānasupārī* and garments. He greatly honoured them, who in their

turn exclaimed: "Blessed, Blessed," and then returned to their homes.

215. Gifts were now given to the Brahmans, who had come to the birthday celebration. Samartha himself worshipped the noble Vaishnavas, giving them gifts of garments. 216. The king took leave, and he returned to his palace (at Sātārā). Samartha started suddenly, and went to Shahāpura.

DISCIPLES OF RĀMDĀS INCREASE

217. Akābāī, Venubāī and, thirdly, the wise Bahinābāī who were devoted to their *swāmī*, immediately followed after him. 218. A great many other disciples now came and remained with Samartha. He then went to Battisashirāle, and there worshipped Māruti. 219. From there he went to Umaraja and then to Tembhī. There worshipping Māruti with reverence he went on to Kolhāpura. 220. He bathed in the lake, and then went to see and worship Lakshmī. His disciples all went out to beg for food, and dined on their return. 221. As soon as the inhabitants of the city learned that Samartha had arrived they came to see him. They made their *namaskāras* with sincere hearts and embraced their *sadguru*.' 222. Here he made more disciples, and turned them to the worship of Shrī Rāma. He taught the people by their listening to his *kīrtanas*, and thus they easily became seekers after Final Deliverance. 223. The money he received here, he spent where it would do good. He remained there a month preaching to the people. 224. He exalted the power of God's name. Listen to the *abhanga*, you fortunate *bhaktas*. By merely listening to it, one becomes attached to Shrī Rāma with love.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

225. Such were the *kirtanas* Samartha performed in this place By merely listening to him, people became entirely without bodily consciousness. 226. Then Rāmdās, by shouting aloud God's names, aroused them to consciousness. He then lovingly sang the closing hymn of praise, and waved the wave-offering over the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma]. 227. All bowed to the *svāmi*, and received the favours of sweetmeats. Mahīpati, the servant of God's servants, sings of the praiseworthy deeds of the saints.

228. *Svasti.* This book is the *Shrī Santavijaya.* By merely listening to it, the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, pious *bhaktas*, therefore, listen. This is the eighteenth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XIX

GOD THE REFUGE OF HIS SAINTS

1. The God-loving *bhaktas* of Shri Rāma, ever indifferent to worldly things, have all their earnest desires fulfilled by the Dark-complexioned-one [Rāma]. 2. God supreme is pleased by the unlimited devotion of His *bhaktas*. The Husband-of-Sitā [Rāma] Himself carries to completion their efforts. 3. If His good *bhaktas* lack anything, Rāma cannot endure it, and so to be their advocate He became an *avatāra*.

RĀMDĀS GOES TO CHANDRAGIRI (MAHĀBALESHWAR)

4. In the last chapter there was related in detail the celebration of the birth of Māruti, in which Rāma took the form of Rāmdās, and carried it to completion. 5. In twelve different towns there was one Rāmdās, there being no difference between God and His *bhakta*. 6. A tree naturally grows from a seed. The seed is found in the tree, so a great *bhakta* comes from God, and God increases his *bhakti* [spirit of worship.]

7. After the celebration, Rāmdās went to Kolhāpura, and there turned all the people to the worship of Rāma. He then thought to himself: 8. "I must go to all the sacred places in this region, and see all the deities there. If I remain in one place, the wishes of people will not be gratified." 9. Thus thinking, he went into the forest, without anyone's knowing his intention. The people became astonished. 10. Samartha went and stayed on the mountain called Chandragiri [probably Mahābaleshwar] His company of disciples, hunting for him, finally saw him there. 11. When Rāma went in search of Sitā, He met Hanumāna [Māruti] at this place.

So Rāmdās remained here, his soul delighting in the scenery. 12. There is here a heavenly lake, from which an abundant stream of water flows. In the lake the lotus flowers wave. Merely to look at it gives peaceful rest to the soul. 13. The glory of the place is extraordinary. There is an *abhanga* of Rāmdās in reference to it in a metre fitted for singing with a tambourine. Read it, you, the all-knowing:—

'(1) *On the mountain of Chandragiri the summit is hidden; where the all-knowing Lord-of-the-Yogis [Shiva] dwells.*

(2) *That Lord-of-the-Yogis is a strange one. The summit pierces the heavens. There is no other place in the world like it.*

(3) The place is strangely beautiful. The soul finds happiness here. If one looks upward to the sky, it seems a solid blue.

(4) No wind blows there constantly, therefore it is known as a windless place. In the hot season one does not need much clothing.

(5) On the two sides are the Krishnā and Koynā rivers. Between them is the mountain with its precipices. As one looks at the scenery, it is most gratifying.

(6) Below the mountain are seen fields of rice, where ploughs are driven. Travellers from many places come and go along its paths.

(7) On the summit of the mountain are flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, some with horns, some as calves. And here and there the boys, who tend the flocks and herds, play among themselves.

(8) Looking around one sees the glory of these mountains with their perpendicular precipices and deep valleys, enveloped in mists [*dhukate*] which come and go.

(9) Looking down from the mountain towards the Konkan, the scene looks like another Kailāsa [Heaven of Shiva]. One's heart feels the desire to go there.

(10) On one side of this mountain is the Mānadesha, and on the other is the South Konkan and Karhāda, Dattagiri and Pattana are in its vicinity.

(11) King Rāma came here because of Hanumāna [Māruti]. To look at the God there (Rāma) is a feast to one's eyes.

(12) Hanumanta (Māruti), the eleventh Rudra (Shiva), is Rāmdās' refuge, you, *bhaktas*, hasten to meet him. *

14. Such is the glory of the place (Mahābaleshwar) described by the lips of Rāmdās. He remained there three months, daily performing enthusiastic *kirtanas*.

RĀMDĀS VISITS SACRED PLACES NEAR KOLHĀPURA

15. Rāmdās also visited the sacred places in the vicinity of Kolhāpura, well known through the *Purānas*. Rāmdās visited them all. Listen to their names. 16. Mahālakshmi was victorious, and killed the demon Kolhāsura. She is, therefore, the presiding deity at Kolhāpura. She is glorified in the *Purānas*. 17. There are many temples here, also the ponds Rankāle and Padmāle. Their waters are exceedingly pure. By bathing in them the filth of the soul is washed away.

18. North of Kolhāpura is the very sacred town of Keshāpura, on the bank of the Panchagangā. The glory of the place is great. 19. At a distance from it is the

* This description corresponds almost exactly to the region now called Old Mahābaleshwar and Elphinstone Point Just below the actual source of the Krishnā there is a mountain peak now called Chandragiri It is probable that in former times the whole of Old Mahābaleshwar, Elphinstone Point and Chandragiri bore the one name of Chandragiri. This description appears also in *Dāsavishrāmadhāma*, p 633, with variations in text.

Jalashayana lake in which lotuses are found. From there can be seen the Fort of Panhāla, and every one looks at it. 20. Further on is the mountain of the Rishi Mārkandeya, and higher than that Ratnākara. Kedāreshvara came here out of love from the Himalayas. 21. He then came to Lakshmiche Sirāle, where various kinds of cobras appear. A great pilgrimage [Nāgapanchmī] takes place here in the month of August, drawn thither by the force of their faith in the power of those serpents. 22. He then passed through Dhavaleshvara, Bholeshvara, Rudreshvara and Chāpeshvara. The extraodinary glory of these places has been declared by Rāma Himself. 23. At Chandragiri [Mahābaleshwar] a prideless poet once lived. Samartha visited all these places to his great delight. 24. After thus visiting all the southern sacred places, he returned to his disciples. When he returned to the Vale-of-Chāphala the people rejoiced. 25. Rāmdās was pleased to remain there a few days, and then taking his disciples with him, he went into the forest. 26. All the disciples had to go to beg for their food, while Samartha went to perform his bath. The meal was made ready, and all sat down to finish it. 27. When the *svāmī* was seated, all the disciples sat in a circle around him.

MUHAMMADAN INTOLERANCE

Turning now to events at Māhulī, the occurrences there were most extraordinary. 28. Uddhava Gosāvī lived there, and his disciples performed *kīrtanas*. Many people had assembled there to listen. They were men and women of the highest ranks. 29. The cymbals, *vīnā* and drum were being played, and many kinds of hand instruments. There were also loud shouts of God's names. Suddenly the following event took place.

30. The Emperor Aurungzebe had a police station at Māhulī. The Muhammadan captain became very angry

over the *kirtana*. 31. He, therefore, ordered his subordinates to charge them with disorderly conduct, arrest them, and bring them before him. Obedient to his orders, those evil men rushed to arrest the singers. 32. Men and women of the highest rank in the town were seated listening. The Muhammadan's servants began to beat these people. 33. This attack coming so suddenly the *kirtana* performance at once melted away. Just as when a man of the Mānga caste coming into a Brahman assembly causes all to run away. 34. Or as when a marriage taking place, suddenly a death occurs. In the confusion that results, the marriage parties are glad to hasten away. 35. Or as when the Brahmans are sitting at a feast, and a dog comes treading on their leaf-plates. The diners leave their places, and rush away. So was it with the *kirtana* listeners. 36. The mad subordinates of the Muhammadan Captain continued beating the audience. Because of this violent treatment, all fled away. 37 Some of the men of highest rank in the town appealed to the Muhammadan. "These fakirs," they said: "are followers of Rāmdās. You should not give them trouble." 38. Although thus appealed to in many ways, that evil man would not listen. He was of an ungodly temperament and hated Vishnu. 39. Just as the ten-headed Rāvana was thrown into a rage when he heard Shrī Rāma praised. Or as the king of Magadha (Jarāsandha) disliked to hear of the praise of Shri Krishna. 40. Or as one with violent fever dislikes even dainty food, or as an impotent man has no love for his wife. As the deaf have no liking for music, so the Muhammadans disliked the story of Hari. 41. When he saw Brahmans in their holy garments, these Muhammadans would go and defile them by touching them. They would lick with their tongues the marks on their foreheads such were these extremely evil inclined men. 42. These Muhammadans had thrown down ancient temples, and

with the material built mosques. Wherever they saw some miracle performed, that place alone did they preserve from destruction.

43. Thus while Uddhava Gosāvī was performing his *kirtana*, this violent attack took place all around him. And although the citizens of high rank appealed, the captain would not listen at all to them. 44. Indeed, he sent other subordinates with orders to arrest the Hindu fakirs and bring them to him. Here they could not expect mercy from anyone, except from Rāma Himself. 45. The subordinate had attacked the audience while the *kirtana* was going on, and all the listeners had to flee away. They used curses and vile language in their evil words. 46. They broke the strings of the *vinās*, and destroyed the drums. They bound Uddhava Gosāvī and took him along with the other chorus leaders. 47. In the houses men and women said among themselves: "This Muhammadan has given us a lot of trouble. When will God overturn him?" Thus they cursed this Muhammadan. 48. This police captain sat on his balcony upstairs. The subordinates brought Uddhava bound before him. 49. The officer said to his servants: "Go and call the Kājī in order to make him a Muhammadan." So said this man of excessive evil. 50. Uddhava, full of fear, began to contemplate the feet of his *svāmī*. He exclaimed: "I wonder what my Fate has written [on my forehead]. O my mother *sadguru*, rush to my help."

51. In the meantime Rāmdās was sitting in his usual place at Chāphala. Suddenly the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāmā] appeared to him, and told him what was taking place. 52. Just as a mother rushes in haste when her child is in danger, so hastened the dear *sadguru*. Ākābāī grasped his feet and asked, 53. "What is the cause of this sudden haste?" Samartha smiled and replied:

"They are planning to make Uddhava a Musalman So I must go to him 54 The harmful Muhammadan, a mass of sin, has met with one who is characterized by goodness He repeated an *abhanga* which listen to with reverence

(*Abhanga* not translated)

55 "My disciple Uddhava lies in the impious Muhammadan's town' After giving this information, Rāmdās hurriedly started 56 So it seemed to the people, but in fact, he at that very movement appeared there at the Muhammadan's in the form of Māruti, where he violently swung his tail 57 The angry Muhammadan had already given a command to the Kājī [priest] to make a Mussalman of the Hindu fakir who had been brought there 58 Ramdas listened to these words that fell from the Muhammadan's lips, and then assuming a fearful appearance, uttered a loud cry 59 Hearing Māruti's outcry, the whole assembly, was thrown into confusion, just as I would think might happen when at the final destruction of the universe the earth must tremble before fierce Supreme Death 60 Just so Māruti seemed to the Muhammadan. Suddenly Samartha gave a great leap, slapped the Muhammadan on his cheek, and sent him sprawling on the ground 61 The Muhammadan's servants were near him, but when they saw the trouble he was in, they at once ran away, for their terror of Māruti was great 62 For four *ghatikas* the Muhmmadan lay in a faint When he became conscious he made obeisance to Samartha, saying 63 "You are evidently God in visible form Forgive me my fault I am Thy guilty slave' This he said standing with hands joined palm to palm 64 Samartha then assumed his ordinary form, and said to him "Why do you hate us? It was for that that I smote you 65 Did Khudā [Muhammadan word for God] create the Muhammadans and did a thief create the Hindus? Your

Qurān says: "God is the preserver of the world." 66. Samartha then composed an *abhanga* in the Musalmani language, which I quote here. Give thought to its teachings.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

RĀMDĀS A PROLIFIC POET

67. Samartha composed much poetry in the Musalmānī language. I have quoted above but one of them, because my hearers have a distaste for that language. 68. My hearers do not understand the Musalmānī language, and the metres are not familiar to them for the purpose of reading. Perhaps you, my readers, may say: 'Why this needless introducing of other events?" So I leave them.

69. Samartha composed numberless *abhangas* of great variety. All of them I have not been able to acquire, but even with a few one finds gratification. 70. He wrote some of his verses on *palas* leaves, and then threw them into the stream of the Krishnā river. Some of them came into the possession of King Shivājī. Later Kalyāṇa Gosāvī wrote down his verses. 71. When Rāmdās was alone in the forest, and prayed to Shrī Rāma, only God Supreme knows who wrote down those tenderly worded verses. 72. Vālmīki's verses number a billion, but how few of them have come to light? One only sees what one really desires to see. 73. Air fills the whole universe but one's breath occupies but a cubit foot. All are ready to stand in aid of the king, but no one has all the required strength. 74. In a rich man's home there are many bales of clothes, but he wears only as many as he needs. 75. An abundance of food is cooked at one's house, but the wise one only eats sufficient to appease his hunger. If he takes a single morsel more, it would surely do him harm. 76. So the saints have composed numberless verses for the

saving of the world. If anyone thought of committing them all to memory, the mind would not be equal to it. 77. Rāmdās was a man of vast intellect Even when he spoke casually he spoke in the *abhanga* metre Of course, they will now all come to light, so one must be content with the few.

THE MUHAMMADAN CEASES PERSECUTION

78. In the last section there was mention of the severe punishment given to the Muhammadan, and then how he besought Rāmdas to carry on their religious services as they wished. 79 'Let no one now prevent the Brahmans from observing their duties, nor hinder the Hari *Kirtanas*' Issuing this order, the Muhammadan made a *namaskāra* to Samartha 80 Ramdās then took Uddhava and started for Pali, and put up in the famous temple of Khandobā 81. Together with his disciples Samartha sat in the assembly hall, and cautioned every one to be very watchful. 82. "This Kaliyuga is very evil. The Muhammadan kings are evil doers. If Rāma has mercy, then only seekers after final Deliverance will be able to pass through this worldly existence."

(*Abhanga* not translated)

83. Hearing these words of Samartha's, all made him a *namaskāra*, and said "If you are favourable to us, all hindrances will vanish."

84. Obtaining the consent of Rāmdās, the disciples went into the town to beg their food. The news thus spread in the town, and all came to meet him 85 With a strong desire in their minds to honour him, they brought him materials for cooking. While Samartha performed his bath, the food was prepared. 86. Many Brahmans sat in the temple, and loudly read from the *Vedas* Suddenly the king appeared in order to pay his respects to Rāmdās,

and worshipped him with great pleasure. 87. After all had eaten, a *kirtana* was performed that night. For that one night the *kirtana* was performed, and then Rāmdās departed. 88. The king walked along with him, accompanied by his disciples. They all finally arrived at the Vale of Chāphala, and went to worship Rāma. 89. After finishing their baths, and again worshipping Rāma, Rāmdās worshipped Māruti, and all dined. 90. The *Sadguru* sat down casually, and the disciples near him. He then gave them his command that they should all go (on pilgrimages) over the country. 91. To the north as far as Benares; to the South as far as Rāmeshwar. Thus wandering everywhere to sacred places, they should increase their store of supreme-spiritual-riches. 92. If they met with any pious seeker after Final Deliverance who came to them body, soul and all they possessed, they should give them the initiatory *mantra*. "My command is your authority. 93. You are not to be caught in the snare of desires. You must daily beg for your food. Whatever you may happen to receive, receive it thankfully. 94. Making your begging the means, hold the different homes under observation. You will thus be able to see who are miserly, and who are generous and can judge them accordingly. 95. Whatever happens to be given you in your wanderings over the country, receive thankfully. Return here in time for the celebration of the birth of Rāma."

96. As soon as the disciples received this command they started. They established religious houses here and there, too many to be counted. 97. The followers of Rāmdās became known world-wide. When placing their lotus-hands on the heads of men, the spirit of indifference to worldy things entered into them. 98. Rāmdās was indeed the *avatāra* of Māruti. I know not how many souls have been saved through him. In every place where there

was established a religious houre, there the birth of Rāma was celebrated. 99. There were numberless holy occasions observed, and at every occasion the Brahmans were feasted. If any one should attempt to number them, they would be altogether innumerable. 100. In this way, Rāmdās sent his disciples from country to country in order to turn the people to the worship of Rāma.

RĀMDĀS REFUSES THE KING'S WEALTH

On one occasion king Shivāji in a very humble spirit made a request of his *Svāmi*. 101. "I have vast wealth in my kingdom. I ask that you, Samartha, should use it in your festivals." The *Svāmi* replied to this: "Our giver is the Lord Rāma. 102. O king, I have no desire apart from Him. If begging of our food is our wish-cow then why should His *bhaktas* be troubled? 103. Begging food is an eternal and immortal vine. Your kingdom is perishable. If one accepts your offer, he, though a seeker after final-deliverance, becomes bound to worldly things." 104. Shivāji replied: "Let my Lord accept one half of my kingdom." Samartha answered: "To accumulate that which is perishable, is truly harmful. 105. While you live, your gift (kingdom) will continue, but afterwards the enemy will steal it away. Begging seems to be without cause of fear. So I am convinced in my heart." 106. Listening to Samartha's explanation, the king sat silent.

Listen to how Samartha looked as he sat on his seat of honour: 107. Just as Shiva among the Yogis, as the moon among the stars, or as the Husband-of-Lakshmi [Vishnu] among His company of *bhaktas* resplendent in his glory; 108. so Samartha seemed to all his followers at that time. He then spoke to the good people words of wisdom new to them.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

109 Such were Samartha's words, a mine of knowledge jewels Those who are great in good fortune, they will listen.

THE MIRACLE OF THE POUND OF RICE

110 A seemingly impossible event now took place Listen to it, you pious *bhaktas*. Keshava *swāmi* a God-loving *bhakta* and saint, lived at Bhagānagara 111 The spirit of worship, knowledge and indifference to-worldly things were characteristics that adorned his personality He heard of the fame of Rāmdās 112 That for the salvation of the world he had become an *avatara* of Māruti that when about to be married and the word '*Sāvadhana* ['Beware!] was being pronounced, he fled into the forest 113 Chaste in his habits he wandered about indifferent to worldly things Knowledge indifference to worldy things and a forgiving spirit were always his characteristics. 114 That he installed eleven Mārutis in the valley of the Krishna in the vale of Chaphala and lovingly worshipped Rāma 115 In reference to his oratorical powers, he can only be compared to Jupiter He was kindly disposed to every creature and always indifferent to worldly things 116 Such was the good fame that Keshavadās heard of Ramdas He therefore had an intense desire to meet him, and so said to himself When shall I ever meet a saint like him?

(*Abhanga* of Keshava not translated)

117 Although he had this strong desire, his *bhaktas* would not let him go to visit Ramdas He was weak in body, so wrote a letter to Rāmdas instead 118 Keshava *Swāmi*, therefore, gave his command to one of his good Brahman disciples You understand that Ramdas is in the region of the valley of the Krishna in the vale of Chāphala 119 Hasten and give this letter to Samartha,

and in my stead make him a prostrate *namashkārā*". 120. Keshava *Swāmi* folded his letter, and addressed it. The disciple then said to his *swāmī* that he had no money with which to pay the expenses of the journey. 121. So the good *sadguru* kindly gave him a seer of rice With that seer only, tied in his mantle, he started on his journey. 122. He regularly boiled this rice, which tasted as sweet as nectar, but the same amount of rice remained tied up in his mantle just as before Such are the seemingly impossible events in the lives of the saints 123. This Brahman, a *bhakta* of his *sadguru*, travelled along the road worshipping as he went along. He said to himself "It will be a happy day when I meet the *swāmī*" 124. He had to travel for fifteen days before reaching the vale of Chāphala. Here he received the welcome news that Samartha was in that very place 125 The Brahman was supremely happy Said he "My desire is fulfilled to-day." He therefore performed his bath, and then went to meet the *Swāmī* 126 At that time Samartha was sitting in the temple of Shri Rāma. Around him were all his disciples. Just then the Brahman approached Rāmdās 127. As soon as Samartha saw him, he stood up to receive him. 'Where have you come from?" he asked. The man replied by giving him the letter he had brought. 128 Rāmdās took it, bowed his head to honour it, and then read it. I quote the letter in its *abhanga* form. Let the saints listen to it with reverence

(*Abhanga* not translated)

129 As Rāmdās read the letter he felt very happy. Considering the letter as equivalent to a real visit, he bowed in reverence to it 130. The Brahman then prostrated himself on the ground, adding. "This is my *swāmi's namaskāra*" Samartha raised him up from the ground, and most lovingly embraced him. 131. The Brahman re-

mained there three days, and then asked leave to return. Samartha then gave him garments, and requested the king to give him some money 132 When the King brought the money the Brahman replied 'I am afraid of thieves" So he wrote out a cheque and gave it to him. 133 Samartha then replied to the letter and said to the Brahman "Convey my *namaskāra* to your *guru*' The Brahman joined his hands palm to palm, and asked for the expense of the return journey 134. "When my *guru* sent me to come here, and see you, he gave me a seer of rice It lasted me until I came here Such is the power of my *Shri guru*' 135 When Ramdas heard this statement, he told Ākabai to give the Brahman sufficient uncooked food to last for a day 136. So she gave him some wheat flour, dāla and rice, ghee, sugar and salt Altogether it made a pound in weight 137. The *Brahman then bowed before Samartha took leave of* all, and started on his way He returned to Bhāgānagara, and bowed to his *svāmi* 138 As the Brahman related Rāmdas' manner of life, Keshava *Svāmi* felt great joy, and said to him 'While coming from there what did you eat? *Tell me all in detail.*" *139 He replied "The rice* which you, *Svāmi*, gave lasted me until I reached there For the return journey Rāmdas had me receive uncooked food sufficient for a day. 140 That lasted me until reaching here Such is the glorious power of the saints" He took out the letter sent *in reply, and the Svāmi bowed his head* to it in reverence and read it

(*Shloka* not translated)

141 As Keshava read this letter he was happy in heart, for they mutually understood one another's thoughts.

SHIVĀJI BUILDS A HOUSE FOR RĀMDĀS AT PARALI

Turning now to another event 142. The king, taking his leave of Samatha, went at once to Parali, and

there started work on a palatial building He said. "I shall donate this place to my *Swāmi*". 143 Rāmdās then went up the mountain of Parali and there remained The uneven ground was levelled and the place was made an unusually beautiful one 144 The houses were constructed with long verandahs There were kitchens for the women cooks. To see that place gives satisfaction to the eyes of all 145 The disciples brought back the food they went to beg for Many Brahmans were dined Daily there was the music of the *kirtanas* In these *kirtanas* the sentiment of love was overwhelming 146. There were many wild beasts, and monkeys in that vicinity, but they never disturbed anyone This is most strange 147 Monkeys gambolled over the temple of Shri Rāma day and night All the people saw this, and the sight pleased their eyes.

A LEGENDARY PROPHETIC STORY

(The story verses 148 to 177, not translated)

178 Some one with a doubt in his mind may say that the story is merely the words of a great poet But good people should not say that I have not told it without some foundation for it 179 Great saints have appeared in our country In their line of descent there have been wise *mahantas* I have given attention to their statements 180 Those who have listened to much, who are supremely wise, who have discarded wrong thinking and hatred, do not have doubts arising in their minds as they listen to the stories of the saints 181 Wrong thinking seems to be the root of evil doing Through holy deeds one's faith becomes confirmed Whatever may be the Fate of anyone, his thoughts appear in that direction 182 Of course people may speak for or against one Some praise and some revile, but those who appear to be of the same form as their *sadguru*, feel neither joy nor

pain. 183. The Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna], who abides on the bank of the Bhīmā river, is very fond of the stories of His saints which He, the lotus-eyed one, causes to be related by making me his instrument. 184. I am not a clever, expert poet. I have not the power that comes from a great mind. Mahipati is the loved one of the saints and composes his plain verses.

185. *Svasti*. this book is the *Shrī Santavijaya*. By the mere hearing of it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the God-loving, pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the nineteenth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XX

STORIES IN MARATHI OF THE SAINTS ARE PRAISED

1. The *Shāstras* are founded on the Vedas. The *Purānas* are founded on, and in agreement with, the *Shāstras*. In the *kaliyuga* saints composed Marāthī versions founded on the *Purānas*. 2. I will tell you the reason of this. In the *kaliyuga* men are mentally inferior, deficient in intellect, and no one understands the meaning of Sanskrit. 3. One might listen to the *Purānas* from the lips of panditas, but no one has the money needed to give them. The rich maintain *Purāniks* of their own, but what can the others, poor people, do? 4. Take for example the life history of Krishna. By merely listening to it, one possesses the means of salvation. This is the arrangement made by Dvaipāyana, but people do not take it to heart. 5. Therefore, becoming an *avatāra*, in the form of a saint, he has lovingly composed Marāthī books. Innumerable dull and foolish minds have been saved by merely listening to them. 6. And when describing the lives of the saints it is done on the foundation of *abhangas*, just as when one attempts to look at the sun, he finds its light to be self-originated.

(The legendary story, 7 to 151, not translated)

152. In the next beautiful chapter, the Husband-of Rukminī [Krishna] is the one causing the story to be written. Mahipati through His blessing does the relating of the lives of the saints. 153. *Swasti*. This book is the *Shri Santavijaya*. By the mere listening to it, the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the twentieth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XXI

PARENTAL SERVICE THE HIGHEST FORM OF WORSHIP

1. If by good fortune anyone after passing through an infinite number of rebirths, finally is born with a human body, where is the specially worthy place where he may perform innumerable good deeds? 2. I will tell you as I may be able, how the seeker after final salvation may obtain a direct revelation of God through the doing of good deeds. Let the audience listen with reverence. 3. One's mother and father are his principal deities. Such is the sure word of the Vedas. Their service is the right duty of a son. They should never be neglected. 4. He, who is a *bhakta* of his father's, possesses an accumulation of good deeds without number. All the sacred places come to see and worship him, and in coming all become purified from sin. 5. Think of Pundalika's good heart, how he served his mother and father. That service made God feel that He was his debtor, and so He came to his town. 6. Nārada said to Pundalika: "God Hari has come to meet you. Give him a seat." Pundalika threw a brick (for God to stand on.) 7. Pundalika had gained this idea of parental worship, and that pleased the Lord-of-Heaven. And so the image of Pānduranga stands to-day on a brick with his feet parallel. 8. In the *kaliyuga* many have become *bhaktas*. They have through Pānduranga had a direct manifestation of God, and the dull and ignorant-minded are saved by merely the sight of Him.

RĀMDĀS REVISITS PANDHARPUR

9. In the last chapter there was the story of king Jayatpāla. He persecuted Brahmans, so Vishnu had to become an *avatāra*. 10. Under the name of Mukundarāja the world-guru manifested Himself, and after preaching

to the king, he composed the book called *Vivekasindhu*, 11. to which after one listens, all doubts vanish from the mind. Listen now to what happened to the heavenly chorister by name of Malaya. 12. In order that he might be saved, a third birth took place. He became a Mahāra [Chokhāmelā] at the eternal city of Pandharpur. 13. Through the effect of his good deeds in a former birth, he fell in with a saint. As there were constant *kirtanas* in Pandharpur he was able to listen to them with pleasure. 14 In the month of Ashādha [July] and Kārtika all the saints are to be met there. In order to gain a livelihood, he was accustomed to bring loads of wood fagots and sell them in the city. 15. Māruti became an *avatāra* in order to save him. He turned many men to worship, and thereby made his good deeds manifest.

16. Turning now to Rāmdās, he had installed images (of Rāma, Lakshmana and Sitā) in the Vale of Chāphala, by which he turned many to the worship of Rāma, and many came with love to see and worship Him. 17. Samartha was continually performing *kirtanas* in the presence of the God with feelings of love. By merely listening to them, the dull-minded were purified.

18. One day as all the disciples were sitting near him, he said: "Let us go at once to Pandhari." Following this remark, he immediately started. 19. All his disciples followed after him, joyfully worshipping him as they went along. 20. As people from town to town understood that Rāmdās was on his way to Pandhari, a great multitude of pilgrims joined him. Their joy was without limit. 21. There was the sound of cymbals and drums, and there was the sweet music of the *vinās*. There were numbers of bands of singers carrying banners. These noble Vaishnavas made a gay appearance. 22. Wherever Samartha stopped for the night, there he performed a

kīrtana and listeners had rising in them worshipful feelings for Rāma joined with indifference to worldly things.

23. In the meantime King Shivājī was hastening to the Vale-of-Chāphala desirous of meeting his *svāmī*. But Samartha was not to be seen there. 24. Bahiṇābāī had been placed in charge of the temple along with Annāppā Gosāvī. These told the king all that had happened. 25. They said: "Samartha has gone with all his followers to Pandharī." Hearing this, the king was delighted and added: "I also must start on that pilgrimage." 26. Taking the necessary materials with him, the king started. Rāmdās was journeying ahead of him along with the saints and other good people. 27. On the tenth of the bright half of the month of Kārtika (November) Samartha arrived at Pandharī. As his company saw from a distance the dome of Vithobā's temple, all were full of joy. 28. The saints embraced saints. They made one another *namaskāras*. Every one lost personal pride. Such is the powerful influence of that sacred city. 29. They sang hymns of praise, and waved offerings towards the dome of the God's temple. Young and old walked barefoot, shouting aloud the names of God. 30. Thus on the tenth of the month, in festive procession, Rāmdās arrived at Pandharī. They bathed in the Chandrabhāgā river, and concluded the various customary and prescribed religious rites. 31. After worshipping Māruti, they went to worship at Pundalīka's shrine. Then all the saints started to circumambulate the sacred city.

32. While the above was going on king Shivājī, travelling rapidly, arrived. As he saw the world-*guru* he experienced joy of heart. 33. He worshipped Samartha, he greeted the saints, he furnished them with tents with side curtains, and all encamped on the sand of the river. 34. The number of pilgrims was very large, and all were shouting

" Victory, Victory !" Here and there was to be heard the music of the *kirtanas*. There was no limit to the joy that was felt. 35. After Samartha and his company had circumambulated the sacred city, they went to see and worship the God. The procession took with them the bands of singers carrying banners and the loud sound of the music was heard. 36. Accompanied by the cymbals and drum, Rāmdās sang in his loving way. I quote his *abhang* here in this chapter. Listen attentively to it, you pious ones.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

37. Thus describing the glory of Pandharl, Rāmdās went to worship the God. He came to the great door of the temple, and there prostrated himself on the ground. 38. He lovingly worshipped Māruti, and talked privately with him No one outside understood what they said, but good men infer from their own experiences. 39. Then they passed into the assembly hall, and there prostrated themselves on the ground They bowed to the images of Jaya and Vijaya with loving feeling 40. As they entered into an adjacent inner room they saw there the dark coloured image. Its eyes were directed to the tip of its nose, and its two hands gave beauty to its waist. 41. Its feet were parallel on a brick, the loved spot for all His *bhaktas*. As Rāmdās saw it, he lovingly embraced it. 42. That the deity of Pandhari is so simple-minded as to receive first an embrace and then the prostration on the ground perhaps raises a doubt in some minds, but listen to what really happens. 43 As the *bhakta* touches the God's feet, his consciousness of self entirely disappears, and God altogether forgets his own divinity. The idea of their unity seizes each of them. 44. Therefore, if one has the thought of a double nature of himself and God, he should first embrace the feet of God. If anyone has not this sense

of duality between him and God taken away from him, how can he enjoy the peace that comes from love? 45 Therefore it was that Rāmdās first embraced the feet of the image of Pāndurangs, and then he placed his head lovingly on the lotus feet of the image 46 God said to him "My dear *bhakta* the resting place of my life I am sorry for you You have become cruel 47 Rāmdās replied "My mind is always on Thy feet Only my body wanders from place to place through the effect of Fate 48 All the animate and inanimate things that my eyes see they are but Thine own form O Chakrapāni [Krishna] There is not the least place in all the universe where Thy power is not displayed 49 Hearing Rāmdās words the Life-of the world was pleased and replied to Rāmdas 'Over your good qualities one should wave the bitter nimba leaves and salt. 50 Knowledge Indifference-to-worldly things and the loving spirit of worship are all of them in you There fore it is that I feel the desire of looking on the person of such a saint as you 51 As the image of Pānduranga said this Rāmdās repeated an *abhanga* which I shall quote in this chapter and let saints listen to it with reverence

(1) O Vithoba Thou art our family deity We go not for refuge to any other

(2) My heart is at Thy feet In my heart is the desire to embrace Thy feet

Chorus Hasten to help me O mother Vithoba Leap to my aid

(3) My heart breaks with the desire to embrace Thee I am unable to bear the sorrow of not embracing Thee

(4) Now lift up Thy arms and hasten to help me O Vithobā

(5) Rāmdas pleads with pitiful voice Stretch out Thine arms and come to my help

(6) My eyes are filled with tears, so anxious am I to embrace Thee.

52. Listening to Rāmdās' words, the God felt very deep love. Then stretching out His arms, He lovingly embraced him. 53. God delights in loving devotion. He cares for nothing more. God greatly loves to say: "I serve him (a devoted *bhakta*) with all my body."

54. Well, God Hari said to Rāmdās: "I always dwell in the temple of your heart. But I wish also to go and meet with the saints and *mahantas* at the eagle platform." 55. At this expressed wish of the Life-of-the-world, Rāmdās made a *namaskāra*. He then went around the temple keeping it to the right, and met Satyabhāmā [wife of Krishna]. 56. He also met with Lakshmī, Rādhā and Rukminī, the original *Māyā*, and his family deity. As he worshipped her he felt great joy. 57. He then came to the eagle platform, and there he saw to his surprise all the saints. Those who had conquered the six enemies of the soul, and were Vaishnavas, who had a direct manifestation of God. 58. If you should ask who they were, listen to their names, for merely by listening to their names, one's sins are burned away. 59. There was Rangasvāmī, the noble Vaishnava, his brother Ātyā Jayarāma Gosāvī of Vadagāva. These had a direct manifestation of God. 60. Then there was the *bhakta* Bodhalā of Dhāmanagāva. He was always a God-loving man, and indifferent to worldly things. Tukārāma was there performing a *kīrtana*, and he sat listening to him. 61. Moreover there were many more Vaishnava *bhaktas* there, but to what extent shall I record them on this page? Sufficient to say the pilgrims were without limit in number, and shouting aloud, "Victory, Victory!" 62. As the saints saw Samartha, they all arose to welcome him. They fell at one another's feet, and stretching out

their arms embraced one another 63 Tukāram was standing while performing his *kirtana*, and his eye caught sight of Rāmdās He at once prostrated himself on the ground before him, his mind unable to contain its joy. 64. While Tukārām performed his *kirtana* Samartha sat listening King Shivāji also with all his ministers came to listen 65 The king Shivāji with sincere feelings made a *namaskāra* to all the assembled saints He was very fond of *kirtanas*, and so sat attentively listening. 66 Standing behind Tukāram were fourteen noble Vaishnavas With the accompaniment of cymbals and drums they sang with the enthusiasm of love 67 They shouted out the name of Vitthala. They clapped their hands to the cries of " Victory ! Victory !! " That crowd of saints was full of joy The sound (of the shouts and *music*) echoed through vast space 68 Through the sentiment of love in the words of the *kirtana*, Tukarām s heart became full of joy He sang words of blessing Listen attentively to them, you pious folk

(*Abhangas not translated*)

69 The noble Vaishnavas were highly pleased with these blessed words of Tukarām, and applauded him with cries of ' Victory ' Victory ! The enthusiasm was intense 70 The sky echoed with the loud noise of the cymbals and drums It was the tenth day of Kārtika (November) The sun was now setting 71 So lighting the lights, they waved them over the Husband of Rukmini [Krishna] Sweetmeats were then distributed to all the seated saints 72. Ramdas with his fine appearance sat in the midst of the assembled crowd of saints He remarked "I have enjoyed to-day this *kirtana* performance My heart feels a sense of satisfaction 73 After making this remark Samartha repeated a *shloka* The sentiment of this *shloka* should be deeply contemplated It contains the emotion of love

(Verses not translated)

74 "So many are God's different names, (and saints enjoy them as so many dainty dishes) The dining saints partake of the names of God (Hari). Their belching gives evidence of their satisfaction, but their desire for more is not fully met. 75. With our mouths we eat perishable food, and it passes out through the fundament. But when the name of God is taken in through the ear it never even to eternity passes out of it. 76. If one eats too much it results in constipation or cholera. But he who drinks the nectar of God's name, he easily becomes immortal."

77. All the saints now went to circumambulate the city, and the whole city resounded with the loud noise of those who were singing. 78. The next day, which was the eleventh of the fortnight, was a day of great rejoicing to the Vaishnavas. At night *kirtanas* were performed on the sandy bed of the river, started by Rāmdās. 79. They had erected a pavilion behind the shrine of Pundalika, and in it saints, *mahantas*, and Brahmans with kindly feelings towards one another, sat down to listen with loving thoughts. 80. Here Samartha repeated many *abhangas*. I will quote one of them, which is proved true by experience. Listen, all of you pious ones.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

81. Thus the noble Vaishnava minutely described the glory of *bhakti*. The performance continued for the four watches of the night, accompanied with the loud shouts of God's names. 82. When in the East the sun arose, they waved the wave offering around the Husband-of Rukmini (Krishna), and distributed sweetmeats to all. All then went back to their respective places.

83. But Samartha after bathing went at once to the temple, when lo! at that very moment the king arrived

with the materials for a special performance of worship 84 The God was bathed with the five-nectars, and anointed, while *mantras* were repeated The God was dressed in a yellow raiment, the sight of which brought joy to the eye 85 A beautiful turban woven with golden thread was wound around His head with ornaments set with jewels Around His neck was hung a garland of pearls which by its brilliancy seemed of limitless lustre. 86 On His neck was the brilliant *Kaustubha* jewel He wore a costly brown shawl, which made the dark complexioned one look very elegant A garland of flowers adorned His neck 87 Rāmdās offered Him incense, lights, camphor and platters of light, and an offering of cooked food Brahmans loudly intoned *mantras* and Samartha offered him handfuls of flowers. 88 After worshipping Him in this way, Brahmans were feasted and many kinds of divinest food were served to the twice-born (Brahmans) 89 After the twice born had eaten all were given *pānsupari* and favours of money Then after the Brahmans had given the *mantra* dedicated rice, they returned to their respective places 90 Then all, including Ākabāī and Venubāī and all the king's retinue dined together At the third watch of the day they began the reading of the *Puranas* 91 Samartha sat on his mat and all the saints and *mahantas* gathered around him But on that occasion Ākābāī read from the *Dāsabodha*

RĀMDĀS EXPLAINS A CHAPTER IN THE *Dasabodha*

92 A special event took place previous to these happenings Listen to the interesting story Formerly a disciple of Ramdas came to Pandharī. 93 He remained many days there gaining his food by begging in the city He daily read the *Dasabodha* 94 He used to sit on the eagle platform and read it respectedly He used to explain

This Pandharpur is a wholly sacred city (*kshetra*) and God Vithobā is the Knower of this sacred city (*kshetradnya*)."— 146 Again Ramdas called him nearer and he came very close to him A circle was drawn around him and he was asked 'Who are you? 147 He answered 'I am a knowing Brahman (a knower of *Brahma*), therefore I am in reality a Brahman. Your minds question the truth of the fourteen *Brahmas* but listen to my description of them. 148 He spoke these words of wisdom, and his features shone with light The twelve clay marks of the *tilaka* and the sacred thread adorned him. 149 As the evil minded saw his features, they remained silent The God loving saints rejoiced, for they had no thought of hatred or dissatisfaction 150 The Brahman then from his own lips repeated two Sanskrit *shlokas*, giving a list of the fourteen *Brahmas* Listen all of you!

(*Shlokas* not translated)

151 Thus by meeting with Samartha, the Nameless (out-caste) became a Brahman and with his own lips repeated the list of fourteen *Brahmas* 152 As the pandits listened they lost their pride, and the saints and God loving *bhaktas* were full of joy 153 Rāmdās then said to him 'Who were you formerly ? Tell us in detail. It will remove the doubts of every one 154 The Brahman replied " I was a heavenly chorister Malaya who lived in Heaven One day I drank an intoxicating liquor and amused myself in a pond of water 155 Accompanied by women and unclad I gave myself up to sensual pleasures The *Muni* Nārada saw me thus 156 He immediately visited on me the curse that I must endure three low births I remember all that now in this unusual recitation of my former life 157 At first I became a horse at the place of king Jayatpāla. I escaped from that physical form by my sight of Mukundarāja 158 Then

at Paithana my second birth was into a *form of a male* buffalo At the house of a Brahman I was employed continually in carrying leather bags of water on my back. 159 Dnyānadeva the World *guru* happened to come there He had been excommunicated by the Brahmans. He caused me to repeat the Vedas to the great astonishment of the Twice-born 160 When Dnyanadeva started to return to Ālandī he took me along with him. When he reached the forest of Āle, I the buffalo, passed into the other world 161 Dnyānadeva built a tomb for me there, and a temple in my honour And he told me even of the one remaining birth which I had to take 162 Namely the prophecy, 'You will of a surety be born as a Mahar in the sacred city of Pandharī There Ramdas will save you' That fact without effort on my part has taken place today '

(*Abhangas* not translated)

163 While Samartha was thus giving him his blessing, suddenly his head broke, and the divine person within him came out of him, and started upward on his way to Heaven 164 Seeing this miracle the pandits lost all pride They praised Rāmdas saying Saints are truly God in visible form 165 Thus speaking to one another, they began to make a prostrate *namaskara* to Samartha, but the *swami* took them by the hand before they prostrated 166 Said he to them You are powerful Brahmans, worthy of worship by the Great Vishnu Himself who is still adorned by the Shrī *vatsa* mark over his heart 167 That this heavenly chorister was saved was through the power of your favour' The Brahmans then took leave of Samartha, and went to their several homes 168 As they walked along the streets the Brahmans said to one another We wonder how it happened that we saw this seemingly impossible miracle? 169 In Amba-Jogai Mukundarāja came, and instructed king Jayatpāla We have heard of

the saving of the horse at that time. 170. Dnyānadeva really did make the buffalo repeat the Vedas, so we hear it told in *kīrtanas*. The evidence of that fact we have before us today. 171. In the *Dāsabodha* Samartha speaks of fourteen *Brahmas*, and that now seems to us to be true." Thus they conversed with one another. 172. Still the pandits wondered about the three rebirths, but of Rāmdās they said: "He is a man of perfect goodness. There is no other man like him."

173. In the next chapter, written with the authority of the saints, is an interesting story. Mahipati through the boon of their blessing writes the account in this book.

174. *Svasti.* This book is the *Shri Santavijaya.* By the mere listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, wise saints listen. This is the twenty-first delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XXII

MAHIPATI'S HUMILITY OF SPIRIT

1. Victory to Thee, Merciful-to-the-lowly, Lord-of-Pandhari Thou Thyself art the relator of these stories of the saints I am truly a dullard, unable to describe their deeds 2. Thou art fond of the stories of the saints, so I happen to come definitely to know. But by putting me forward as an instrument of Thine, Thou hast fulfilled the needs of many. 3 O God Supreme, even Brahmadeva and the other gods cannot comprehend Thy wonderful deeds Amongst them who am I, a mere man? Thou alone canst comprehend Thine own feelings of love 4 In every way my heart bears witness that I am a dullard, but the cords (that move me) are in Thy hand I am unable to fathom the descriptions of Thy seemingly impossible deeds.

RĀMDĀS RETURNS TO CHĀPHALA

5 In the last chapter there was related a wonderful story of how the Vaishnava *bhakta* went to Pandhari, and there performed an extraordinary act in which he saved the heavenly chorister] Malaya 6 Also how King Shivaji hastened to Ramdās and made him a prostrate *namaskāra*, and how the *bhaktas* shouted cries of "Victory Victory" as they saw the extraordinary deed 7 All the people of Pandhari remarked to one another 'Blessed is the *bhakti* of Ramdas He is indeed the visible *avatāra* of Māruti He has performed an act seemingly impossible 8 All the saints, therefore, came to listen to him such as seekers-after-deliverance, those indifferent-to-worldly-things and those abounding in wisdom Samartha daily performed *kirtanas* At these *kirtanas* the enthusiasm of

their love was great 9 During these *kirtanas* of Rāmdās Māruti came to him in secret unseen and danced in varying steps for he could not hold back his love 10 Soon the day of the full moon came and Nimbarāja performed the *Gopalalāla* Multitudes of the saints assembled to witness it, and the festival was completed in that way

11 After the first day of the dark half all the pilgrims started to return There was a great crowd at the great door of the temple for in every heart there was love 12 When it was night Ramdās came into the temple alone and lovingly embraced the God He then asked leave of the God to return. 13 Rāmdas placed his head on the God s feet, and said 'I am going now back to the valley of the Krishna. Continue Thy love of me O Shri Hari 14 Thus speaking the God loving *bhakta s* eyes filled with tears The dark complexioned one [Krishna] caressed him with his hands and said I am with you always 15 Rāmdās firmly fixed in his mind the form of the image and taking leave at once he went to meet with Māruti and then came to the sand bed 16 Here he bathed worshipped and dined Then together with the king the procession started The *swami* was seated in a canopied seat upon an elephant The king himself waved the fly whisk 17 Wherever the procession lodged for the night there Rāmdas performed a *kirtana.* Finally Samartha reached the Vale of Chāphala, and there met with Shri Rāma

18 On the next day Ramdās gave a feast on account of the festival to the Brāhmans. The king taking leave of Rāmdās returned to his palace 19 Rāmdās remained many days in the Vale of Chāphala daily performing *kirtanas*, and giving readings from the *Dāsabodha.* 20 Discussions took place regarding truth and error Seekers-after final-deliverance received a direct experience of it.

THE VISIT OF JAYARĀMA GOSĀVI

At this juncture Jayarāma Gosāvi of Vadagāva arrived to visit Rāmdās 21. The two made a *namaskāra* to one another. Samartha seated him with honour and reverence. The king lovingly waved the fly-whisk himself over Rāmdās 22. Jayarama Svāmi then made a request. He said "I am intending to celebrate the birth of Krishna [*Janmāshtami*] at my house I invite you to come with all your followers This is the desire of my heart" 23. Rāmdās replied · "In what way are you going to celebrate the festival? Tell me also about the order you follow." 24. Jayarāma then explained "On the first day of the fortnight there will be the installation of the image of Shri Krishna in the pavilion For nine days a feast will be given to Brahmans At night, daily *kirtanas* will be performed. 25. On the tenth of the fornight there will be celebrated the *Gopālakālā* (Krishna's deeds dramatized). These dramatic representations will take place during the night" 26 Samartha replied "Your plan is most excellent, but I have a special wish in connection with the journey there If you will have a chariot (for the God) made, I shall come to you" Jayarāma replied "The building of a chariot cannot be done in haste 27 And the days of the celebration are now very near How can one prepare a chariot so quickly?" Samartha assured him that he need not worry over the matter 28 "I will build a very large chariot, and come with all my followers You will have very much to do at the *matha* [temple and parish house], so hasten back." 29. Hearing these words, Jayarāma was full of joy He took leave of all and departed.

RĀMDĀS' VISIT TO VADAGĀVA

30 Rāmdās now sent some men into the forest, and had them bring some *bamboos* to make the chariot. 31. Through his clever skill Samartha made a chriot of these

bambcos. It had seven divisions, it was high, and well made. On the top he placed *a little dome.* 32. Over this carriage were placed costly draperies, and flags of the seven rainbow colours. To look at it gave joy to the eye. 33. Samartha began that day to build the chariot, and on the third day it was finished. It was indeed not by human skill, and all were astonished at it.

34. The king begged of his *sadguru* that he might accompany him to the celebration. Taking with them a great supply of the materials that would be necessary, the whole multitude started on the journey. 35. There were great numbers of bands of singers carrying banners. In front of the procession musicians played loud music. Samartha rode on an elephant, with the king waving the fly-whisk. 36. As they approached Vadagāva Jayarāma Svāmī felt great joy. He brought along with him a crowd of citizens, and lovingly welcomed their guests. 37. As soon as they saw Samartha, they prostrated themselves on the ground. They hung garlands of flowers around his neck, and made dark coloured marks on his forehead.

38. In such eclat they brought Samartha and his followers to their lodging places. Every one was happy over the coming, and there were loud cries of "Victory, Victory." 39. Samartha performed his bath, and then went to see and worship the God. Seeing the temple, he was much pleased. 40. Various kinds of dainty food had been prepared. Daily there were feasts given to Brāhmans. Hari-*kirtanas* were held at night, and all listened with love. 41 Rangobā Gosāvī of Nājhare and the great *bhakta* Vāmansvāmī were daily performing enthusiastic *kirtanas.* Other noble Vaishnavas also performed *kirtanas.* 42. Rāmdās listened to these *kirtanas* with reverence, whether performed by common or distinguished men. He looked with an impartial eye. He had put aside the evil

feelings of pride 43 The clever disciples of Jayarāma Svāmī wrestled with their tasks day and night The festival made *bhakti* prominent It lacked nothing whatever. 44 Then on the eighth day, the birthday of Krishna, Rāmdās took the stand as leader of the *kirtana* He repeated an *abhanga* that aroused the nine emotions In it he related the story of Krishna. 45 The words of saints are blessed Who can count their number? But I will here in this book quote a few Listen to them, you pious folk.

(*Abhangas* not translated)

46 The audience was thrilled by the *kirtana* of Samartha The heart of every one became as it were Krishna Himself All forgot the illusions of this worldly life 47 Rāmdas spoke in verse and prose He used the *shloka* metre, in eight verse divisions He sang a brief history of Krishna but there was no limit to his expression of love 48 On the eighth and ninth of the month, Rāmdās performed his *kirtana* Then the happy day arrived for the celebration of it, *Gopalakalā*, or the tenth day 49. There was a great celebration that day People came from distant places in crowds. There were groups of men carrying numerous banners, shouting aloud the name of God with cries of "Victory, Victory 50 Jayarama Svāmi then began the *Gopālakāla* (deeds of Krishna dramatized) The multitude of the saints sat to witness it and there was no limit to their delight 51 When Shri Krishna was an *avatara* he played many games All these were now reacted with gestures and motions to see which stirred to overflowing the passion of love 52 The games of *hamāmi humbari* and *lapandāvi* were played The cow herds were represented as dragging Krishna by his feet The churning by Yashoda was acted, and her feelings were represented 53 The part of Krishna s stealing milk was acted and the complaints made to Yashodā.

All these acts were dramatically represented by these servants of Krishna 54 There were also acted the standing of Krishna on the shoulders of the cowherds, and his piercing a hole in the milk jar, and causing a stream of milk to flow, which the cowherds sipped as it flowed down their elbows 55 There were acted the many games Krishna played with the cowherdesses, *phugadi* and *pingā* All the saints joined in these dances 56 While the *gopālakālā* was enacted favours were distributed to all The multitude of the saints rejoiced, and there was no limit to their joy 57 As Rāmdās noticed this wonderful exhibition of joy, he repeated a *shloka* which contained unusual expressions of love Listen all of you, pious folk.

(*Shloka* not translated)

(*Abhangas* of Jayarāma not translated)

58 Such were the blessed *abhangas* that Jayarāma repeated One of these I have quoted above in this chapter that you may realize the joy of his love of God

59 Well after the *Gopalakālā* was celebrated Rāmdās had the chariot brought, which when the people saw they were overwhelmed with astonishment As they looked its dazzling brightness made them close their eyes 60 As the rays of the sun fell upon it, the pinnacle of the canopy flashed a beautiful light As the chariot moved along, the bells on the top tinkled loudly 61 People remarked ' We have never seen a sight like this Blessed is the mind of Rāmdās Certainly no one has a mind his equal ' 62 They saw the bamboo chariot but it was one that [illegible]l never be broken In height it was made with seven [illegible]visions and riding in it was a crowd of people 63 They [illegible] idol for the procession and placed it in the chariot after worshipping it The God's *pādukās* [bas-relief foot impressions] were placed in front, and the

worshippers waved over it the fly-whisks 64 The gathered crowd shouted cries of 'Victory Victory," as they drew the chariot to the music of innumerable instruments 65 The Haridāses sang in love and reverence with their sweet voices, to the accompaniment of cymbals, *vinā*, and drum Great quantities of fragrant powders were thrown up into the air 66 The sky was filled to overflowing by the sound of the drums The *bhaltas* shouted "Victory, Victory " There was no limit to their joy 67. People saw, to their delight, the results of association with the good In it they saw their worldly life reaching its true value, and their eyes experienced a sense of peace. 68. The crowd of people was dense. No one could find a way through them, so that many had to climb up to the upper stories of buildings and on roofs from whence they could view the scene 69 Thus marching in gay procession, the chariot was brought near the temple of Maruti Here Samartha worshipped Maruti, with all his customary methods 70 Every one sang hymns of praise, and then returned to the temple of Hari [Vishnu], and there the great *bhakta* [Rāmdas] stood before the image of Krishna on His throne 71 A garland of fresh flowers was placed around His neck Vast quantities of fragrant powders were thrown up into the air Incense was burned before Him, and many lights were waved before Him 72 The Vaishnavas shouting aloud the names of God, danced before the chief door of the temple They sang many hymns of praise Their hearts could not contain their joy. 73 When night came they conducted a dramatic performance, which was very well acted. They then placed the image of Krishna on a bed, and distributed favours to all present 74 When it was morning the visiting saints were highly honoured The assembled crowd of people finally broke up, but they were unable to bear the sorrow of separation from the God.

RĀMDĀS RETURNS TO CHĀPHALA

75. Unperceived by anyone, Samartha immediately left, and the king, along with the crowd of Rāmdās' followers, followed on behind. 76. When all the company of his disciples arrived at the Vale of Chāphala, they saw Samartha in the temple of Rāma. 77. Along with the king all made Rāmdās a *namaskāra*. Such was this *sadguru* of perfect generosity, in his efforts to save the world. 78. There are some learned men who say they perfectly understand (the great sentence). "I am Brahma;" and then neglect the worship of God in his image form. They are not at all saved, because of their pride of knowledge. 79. But the knowledge of Rāmdās was without a fault. It was united with worshipful feelings, and indifference-to-worldly-things. But he had a deep love for the idol as a visible representation of God, and so festivals in His honour were performed with love. 80. Those who, with claim of knowledge, have no confidence in these visible representations of God, God will show them that they have been deceived. They lose both this life and the life to come 81. Rāmdās was a world-*guru*. He was like the immovable Mount Meru in his indifference to worldly things. He was a mine of *bhakti*, and of indifference to worldly things Men were saved by merely a sight of him.

82. As stated above, Samartha had come to the Vale of Chāphala without telling anyone, and later all his followers arrived accompanied by the king. 83. They had found Samartha in the temple of Rāma, seated and in the act of worship, pleading with Rāma in tender words that manifested his love.

84. As soon as Rāmdās gave him leave, the king left for his capital. And Rāmdās went up into a mountain, and his disciples followed after him. 85. The rule was to go to beg food in one village only. Akābāi cooked the

meal, and Samartha partook of it. 86 Great numbers of people came to visit him, but he allowed no one of them to remain there. Only five of his disciples remained with him on the mountain.

AN APPETITE FOR SWEET CUSTARD

87 One day Samartha said to Ākābāī "I have a longing for some sweet custard So hasten and prepare some" 88. Ākābāī at once placed a large quantity of milk on the fireplace She put into it a handful of rice. Then letting it thicken through boiling it down, she made a most tasty custard 89 She served it on Samartha's leaf-plate, and added to it melted butter and sugar. Samartha ate it with his fingers His belching indicated his satisfaction 90 But he still demanded more of the sweet custard And Ākābāī brought more, and served it on his plate He now forced himself to eat it, although it had become distasteful to him 91 The mouthfuls he took came back into his mouth, but by force he swallowed them Every one was astonished to see him act thus and exclaimed "Samartha, what is this you are doing?" 92 Ākābaī said to him 'What does all this mean?' Samartha's answer was "I still have a longing for that custard. Bring me some more' 93 She brought more and served it By force he swallowd a few more mouthfuls, and then profusely vomited By this time he had destroyed his longing for *sweet custard* 94 Now said he (to his stomach) 'You asked for things sweet, and now why are you sorry for having eaten them? It is through you that this my body keeps in health, but failure to do right are injurious to the bodily organs 95 If you still have further longing come again and ask for some more'. Just then Ākabaī came and spread some ashes over the vomit 96 Then Ramdas composed an *abhanga* in which he censured his heart. I have quoted it here in

this chapter in order to help the seeker-after final-deliverance on his way

(*Abhanga* not translated)

97 After Samartha had repeated this *abhanga* he washed out his mouth, bathed, and took of the mouth-cleanser

98 Kalyana Gosāvī was standing close to Ramdās with his hands joined palm to palm Ākābāi then said 'What a strange disagreeable act on your part' 99 Rāmdas replied "There are five things that one is fond of Their names are sound, sense of touch taste, sight and smell 100 People regard the enjoyment of these as happiness, but in the end they mean sorrow People give themselves to sensual things until they are wearied by them At the end they experience the pains of hell 101 Deer are more fond of the sensation of sound than they are of their lives And so, seduced by it they stop and listen, and the hunter is able to shoot them with his arrow 102 Elephants are lured and entrapped through their fondness for female touch The moth is fond of lustre, and gets burnt in the fire 103 The fish loves to taste and when it swallows the bait, it feels happy, but as the fisherman jerks the line, there is no way in which it can escape death 104 The bumble bee takes in fragrance, as enamoured by the honey in the lotus But when the sun sets (and the lotus closes) it gets caught in the flower 105 Each person has some special longing for something, and they have the same ending as in the illustrations above So that the human body, with its five senses has no good end to look forward to 106 But the sense of taste is the most wicked of all, for by it the other organs of sense are fattened So those who are wise, and noble minded, seek wholly to conquer their sense of taste 107 Those who have not destroyed this long-

ing of the sense of taste, they want things that are sweet Thus they have become *sanyāsis* in vain, and even *gurus* have thus destroyed themselves. 108 *At the time of* death the organs of sense are exhausted, and the man can eat nothing at all, but still the sense of taste demands food. Thus there is no escape from rebirths 109 *It was* for the above reason that I ate to excess and then vomited, and so now I cannot even bear the sight of sweet custard My stomach rebels at the very thought of it" 110 As a response to these words of Samartha the company of disciples made him a *namaskāra*. Then all of them conquered their sense of taste, and discarded everything that was especially sweet 111. For the sake of satisfying *their hunger they ate whatever they happened to get For one seeking for final-deliverance unhindered, the easy way is by destroying the sense of longing for things*

ANOTHER CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF RĀMA

112 In the above manner Rāmdās by example taught those who were seekers-after final deliverance The month of Chaitra [April] now arrived, and the saints began to assemble for the celebration of the birth of Rāma [*Ramanavami*] 113 Men entitled to remuneration for their respective annual services came in good time, and at the door of the pavilion of Shrī Rāma lively music was played 114 *There was also the loud noise of the drums and other instruments the sounds of which more than filled the air A very great crowd* assembled, *shouting the names of God with* cries of "Victory, Victory" 115 Whoever was appointed to perform a *kirtana* for the day he did so, and most delightfully Nine days passed in this way Kalyana Gosavi was appointed for the final dramatic plays 116 A great crowd of saints, *mahantas*, and noble *Vaishnavas* came to the celebration. Listen with reverence to the names of those who were chief and

the most distinguished 117 There was Rangobā of Nājhare, the noble *Vaishnava*, Jayarāma *svāmī* The great *bhakta* Vāmana *svāmi*, who in this Kaliyuga was the *avatāra* of Vyāsa 118 There was the *Vaishnava bhakta* Tukārāma, the supreme *avatāra* of Nāmdeva. His love of God was limitless, and by that love God-supreme was made subservient to him. 119 All these came to the celebration with the highest expectations The saints have no idea of disappointments, for they possess indifference to results 120 A great crowd of Brahmans assembled Enthusiastic *kirtanas* were daily held Various dishes were prepared for the lunch hours Listen to the list of them with reverence —121 *purī* and *kodboli*, fried cakes always ready in the frying pan and roasted corn These were served on the leaf-plates, but did not agree with the Brahmans 122 To eat greasy food in the hot season was injurious to many, so that they exclaimed "We have lost our voices We are not able now to sing"

123 While saints and *sādhus* were performing the *kirtanas* Samartha listened from a distance He climbed up a banyan tree, and sat where no one could see him. 124 At the back of the image of Māruti there was an enormous image of Ganapati and there this banyan tree grew on which Ramdās sat listening intently 125 Below him many went back and forth, but he himself was entirely unseen Under this tree the uninvited twice-born guests sat and talked among themselves 126 They said "We have here a mighty celebration performed by a great person There is a full supply of the stories of God (Hari), but the lunches are always of greasy food, and the cause of sickness" 127 Another remarked "In the hot season, such greasy food smells of smoke, and we feel as though it would be injurious to our eyes" 128 A third remarked "Without curry and dal one s dinner

has no value One cannot fill one's stomach on this light stuff I wonder when our fasting will be over" 129 While this discussion was going on Samartha was listening from above. He kept in his mind the thoughts suggested by the conversation. Leaving that place he went up into a mountain 130. He sat on the mountain top for a few hours, and then returned to take his part in the *kirtanas* He repeated a blessed *abhanga* Listen to it with reverence, you pious folk.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

131. *Sādhus* and saints were well pleased by these words of Samartha's After half the night had gone the *kirtana* came to an end. 132 Then the lights for the wave offering were lighted, and Shrī Rāma was waved over The *Vaishnavas* danced accompanied with shouts of "Victory, Victory" Then came the distribution of sweets

133 As soon as the sun arose Samartha called those on duty, and said to them 'What sort of food have you been preparing? Shrī Rama is not satisfied with it 134 For five days you have been furnishing light food of a greasy character The Brahmans are dissatisfied with it From now on do not do so 135 Shrī Rama became an *avatāra* in order to make Brahmans happy Therefore, you must do whatever will please the Earth-Gods [Brahmans] 136 Rice, dal, and curry (*kathukā*), with *puranpoli*, should be prepared vegetables suitable for Brahmans Rama will be pleased by your doing so" 137 Hearing Samartha's words, the servants replied "We shall do so", and even down to today this variety of food is prepared (for the Brahmans) during the nine days of the celebration 138 Samartha set the custom, and his followers have adhered to it In the Vale of Chāphala no Brahmans have to fast 139 Thus was

celebrated the birthday of Rāma. The crowd of saints was honoured. After distributing gifts to the Brahmans the king left for his palace.

A BRAHMAN BECOMES THE DISCIPLE OF A BARBER

140. Another event happened. Listen to it with reverence, you *bhaktas* and pious folk. 141. There was a disciple of Rāmdās, a barber, who lived in the valley of the Krishnā. He rendered his *sadguru* very faithful service, and as a result, had a direct manifestation of God. Casting aside his worldly occupation, he was initiated as a disciple. 142. He assumed the reddish-yellow robe, and studied the *Dāsabodha*. He ate the food he obtained by begging, and attained the highest knowledge. 143. He became widely known as Krishnā Gosāvi characterised by knowledge, indifference-to-worldly-things, and the spirit of worship. A certain Brahman came to him in a sincere worshipful spirit. 144. Said he: "Initiate me as one of your disciples." And with that placed his head on Krishnāji's feet. The latter exclaimed: "I am a barber. One should not do what is improper. 145. Among all the various castes the Brahman is the highest, and the *guru* of the eighteen castes. So go to Samartha, and be initiated by him." 146. Krishnāji tried many arguments with him, but he would not at all listen. He declared: "My affection is set on you. I have no other wish (than to be your disciple). 147. I have come to you as a suppliant with my body, speech and mind." Such was the language in which Jayarāmpant was continually pleading with him. 148. The two then came to Samartha. Krishnāji placed his head on Samartha's feet, and said: "This Brahman is needlessly bothering me. He is asking that I at once make him my disciple." 149. Rāmdās said to Jayarāma: "You should receive your instruction from a Brahman. Your request is contrary to

ordinary custom and such is the scripture teaching" 150. Thus replying, Samartha repeated a *shloka*. As a seeker after final deliverance reads these blessed words he should realize what is true and what untrue

(Shloka not translated)

151. Although such were the moral teachings of Samartha's words, the Brahman would not listen to the appeal they made. He exclaimed "Please give your command to him to make me his disciple by the initiatory *mantra*" 152. He made this plea, and fell prostrate at Rāmdās' feet Again and again he pleaded saying "You must save me, a lowly man." 153 Seeing his fixed determination, Samartha said to Krishnājī 'Give him the initiatory *mantra*, and let no doubts of propriety remain in your mind" 154 With this command the two went back at once to the *matha* [religious house in the Krishna valley], and there after duly worshipping Rāma the Brahman was inducted into the path of Rāma worship 155 Krishnājī whispered into his ear the mystic *mantra*, and added "Regard my commands as your authority Now go, and worship Samartha Wash his feet, and drink the water (with which they are washed)" 156 Dressed in the reddish yellow robe, he underwent the initiatory rites, and from that time he became everywhere known as Jayarāma Gosavī 157 He regularly visited Samartha and drank the blessed water in which his feet were washed As long as Samartha was alive, he faithfully served the *sadguru* 158 When Krishnājī Gosavī suddenly went to his home above, at the ending of his life his disciple Jayarama was by his side, and remarked that a tomb [*samādhi*] must be erected in his honour 159 On the spot where the *sadguru* was cremated he erected an altar and on it were placed the *pādukas* [foot impressions], which he worshipped with a sincere heart 160 In order

to have a sacred festival in his honour, Jayarāma begged for the necessary food, and after collecting sufficient grain, and assembling the other accessories, he enquired of Samartha 161 And said he "May Your Greatness give the command for a sacred festival in his honour" The *Svāmi* replied "If the Brahmans should hear of it, they will needlessly take exception to it 162 As a noble Brahman by feeling and character you may have collected a large amount of accessories Invite the Brahmans to the feast, and Rāma will keep all hindrances away" 163 Jayarāma listened to Samartha's suggestion, and was very happy about it He returned to his *math* [religious house] and there at once made preparations for the feast 164 He invited by special invitation to the feast all the Brahmans of the town and chance visitors He then bathed, and seated himself (for receiving his guests) 165 The Brahmans came from their baths worshipped the tomb and repeated the Vedic *mantras* But just then the evil minded began their criticisms. 166 They said 'This Jayarāma Gosāvi is a follower of Rāmdās While his *sadguru* is actually living he has started here his anniversary festival in his memory' 167 To this some replied "Krishnāji Gosāvi was a barber, who had the true knowledge. Jayarāma was his disciple always gladly rendering him srvice 168 When the Brahmans of high rank heard this, they said "This is contrary to Scripture One should not take food here With that they got up, and left 169 Jayarāma was deeply troubled by this, but just then he remembered the feet of Rāmdas. And this dear *Sadguru*, knowing conditions by his insight, suddenly appeared in their midst 170 The Brahmans said to him 'There is a sacred festival here in memory of the barber We therefore question whether we should take food here 171 When the sun is close to Aruna his charioteer, why look for light from a picture drawn on a wall? This case seems similar to

that. 172 While you are living and visible, why did Jayarāma take instruction from the barber? Still, if you will perform some miracle, we shall be willing to dine here.' 173 Hearing what these Brahmans said, Ramdās performed a wonderful thing He called to Jayarāma Suddenly the Brahmans saw a strange sight 174 On Rāmdās shoulder sat Māruti and back of Jayarāma was Rāma. This the Brahmans distinctly saw That removed their doubts. 175. They said 'Here everything is Rāma. How can there be any such thing for us as religious and irreligious?" Their doubts having been thus removed, the good Brahmans continued to dine 176 *Panasupāri* and gifts were given to all, and with these gifts the Brahmans were made happy *Mahipati, the bard of the saints sings their praises.*

177 *Svasti* This book is the *Shri Santavijaya.* By merely listening to it all longings of the heart are fulfilled Let the God loving, pious *bhaktas* listen This is the twenty second delightful chapter

CHAPTER XXIII

GOD CARES FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM

1. There are those who without worshipping Rāma adopt many painful methods for salvation. But they do not thereby gain a direct manifestation of God, and so weary themselves in vain. 2. The absolutely sincere worship of those who love God is the root of the right indifference to worldly things. The final result of which is the knowledge that leads to eternal peace. All other endeavours are useless. 3. Those who discard worship, they turn their knowledge into dust. All despise such, and they cannot escape hell. 4. Here below, those worthy of being despised are disliked by God. Those who here below are praiseworthy, are loved by all. Therefore, casting aside pride, one should worship God Supreme. 5. And so those who love the visible form of God (His image), these *bhaktas*, are pleasing to the Supreme Being. The Supreme soul thereby comes under obligations and his *bhaktas*, and removes the sorrows of their earthly existence. 6. If revilers and evil-minded men persecute the *bhaktas* of God, the Merciful-to-the-lowly visibly manifests Himself. He stands before and behind His *bhaktas*, and continually cares for them

RĀMDĀS A POSSESSOR OF A GOD-LOVING HEART

7. In the last chapter the subject-matter was the trouble caused by the Brahmans to *guru* and *bhaktas* Then as a result of Rāmdās' appeal, Rāma manifested Himself. 8. Mārutī was seen on Rāmdās' shoulder, and Rāma appeared at the side of Jayarāma. Having thus manifested themselves to the Brahmans, the sacred festival was carried on to completion. 9. After the feast the Brahmans

left Jayarāma was comforted. He embraced Samartha's feet, and exclaimed "You have protected your helpless one" 10 Rāmdās replied· "Rāma has the same feeling in his heart. He is the Advocate-of-the-lowly" He then repeated an *abhanga* Let the wise listen to it with reverence.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

11. Such was Rāmdās' make-up He was the image of the eternal and perfect *Brahma* In addition, he possessed the spirit of worship towards the visible form of God [the image] He possessed always a God loving heart

RĀMDĀS DIVINES HIS BROTHER'S DEATH

12. On one occasion Ramdās went into the forest. In his mind he held Shrī Rāma. He gave himself up to enjoying him on the mountain top 13 He held Rama in his mind He held Rama in his heart In his sleep all was Rāma. In his wakeful moments all was Rama. In his dream it was Rāma. In his dreamless sleep it was all Rāma, who is the perfect object of desire for His *bhaktas*. 14 He had no other desire, but continually to sing of Rāma, continually to contemplate Rama in private and in public, and always to be thinking of Him 15 And as to Rāma Himself He became Ramdas, and in so doing Rāma really contemplated Himself To save the world he became an *avatāra* of a portion of Maruti 16 Such was Ramdās, without bodily consciousness, wandering about in the forest Later, his disciples arrived, accompanied by Akabai 17. She gathered flowers, fruit of various kinds, and such bulbs and roots as are found in the forest. She placed them before the *Svāmi*, and he gladly ate them 18 According to Ramdas' characteristic of indifference to things, he would eat whatever at the moment happened to be gathered You saints have already heard the story

CHAPTER XXIII

GOD CARES FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM

1. There are those who without worshipping Rāma adopt many painful methods for salvation. But they do not thereby gain a direct manifestation of God, and so weary themselves in vain. 2. The absolutely sincere worship of those who love God is the root of the right indifference to worldly things. The final result of which is the knowledge that leads to eternal peace. All other endeavours are useless. 3. Those who discard worship, they turn their knowledge into dust. All despise such, and they cannot escape hell 4. Here below, those worthy of being despised are disliked by God. Those who here below are praiseworthy, are loved by all. Therefore, casting aside pride, one should worship God Supreme. 5. And so those who love the visible form of God (His image), these *bhaktas*, are pleasing to the Supreme Being. The Supreme soul thereby comes under obligations and his *bhaktas*, and removes the sorrows of their earthly existence. 6. If revilers and evil-minded men persecute the *bhaktas* of God, the Merciful-to-the-lowly visibly manifests Himself. He stands before and behind His *bhaktas*, and continually cares for them.

RĀMDĀS A POSSESSOR OF A GOD-LOVING HEART

7. In the last chapter the subject-matter was the trouble caused by the Brahmans to *guru* and *bhaktas*. Then as a result of Rāmdās' appeal, Rāma manifested Himself. 8. Māruti was seen on Rāmdās' shoulder, and Rāma appeared at the side of Jayarāma. Having thus manifested themselves to the Brahmans, the sacred festival was carried on to completion. 9. After the feast the Brahmans

the *Svāmi's* knowing it, the king sent two spies. They quickly brought back an answer to his letter, saying the brother's death was true 34. The worthy son of Rāmī-Rāmdās, by name of Rāmchandra, wrote to the king that the report was correct. 35 The king questioned the *Svāmi* "How did you know that your elder brother had become one with *Brahma*? We are all astonished." 36. Hearing this question, Samartha repeated an *abhanga* which I have here quoted in order that the listener may possess the evidence of its truth

(*Abhanga* not translated)

RĀMDĀS' BIRTHDAY AGAIN CELEBRATED AT CHĀPHALA

37 Replying thus on that occasion, he added a command to all his disciples. "The festival of Rama, is near at hand, so all of you go to the Vale of Chāphala 38 The Vaishnava *bhaktas* who are appointed and paid for annual service will come there You must begin the festival on the first of the fortnight in accordance with former customs 39 I am prevented from coming just now, but will come on the eleventh day from now Expect me on the ninth day of the fortnight" Thus he commanded his disciples 40 Dattu Divātya, Jayarāma Gosavī, and the third, Ākabāī, only remained to serve him All the others left. 41. Now in the Vale of Chāphala a great multitude of saints gathered During the days there was the feasting of Brahmans, and at night there was the performance of *kirtanas* 42 Thrice in the day there was the worship of Rama, to the loud music of sweet sounding instruments The *bhaktas* repeated the names of God, along with shouts of "Victory, Victory" 43 On the ninth of the fortnight, the processions started When it was about noon, suddenly Samartha arrived to the great joy of all 44 The men and women who had gathered from distant places came to see and

of how in calling for more and more sweet custard, he punished his desire. 19. Sometimes he had daintily cooked food. *Sometimes he lunched on forest fruits.* If he at any time had no bedding, he slept on a rock. 20. The God-loving pious folk praised him with their lips. The wicked and crooked-minded reviled him, but neither gave his mind pleasure nor pain. 21. Such was Rāmdās, a man possessing the supreme knowledge. On one occasion he went running to a place where there was pure water. 22 He leaped into the water, and bathed with his clothes on. He then went, and sat off at one side, to the astonishment of all. 23 Akābāī came, and questioned the *Swāmi*: "Please tell me, O Merciful-to-the-Lowly, the reason why you took a bath today? 24 Yesterday morning I washed all your clothes with my own hands." Thus questioned, Samartha replied 25. "My elder brother, known as Rāmī-Rāmdās, has left his body, and become one with Rāma. 26. In order to observe the command of the *Vedas*, I bathed today in the stream of the Krishnā. It is necessary for me to observe the state of defilement for ten days." 27. Samartha said to Kalyāṇa. "Tell me what day this is." He answered: "This is the dark half of the month of Phalguna [March], the fourteenth day of the fortnight, and a Sunday." 28 Akābāī humbly asked him: "Who had come from his home town (with the news)?" Rāmdās replied "I have heard that it is true." 29. Just then the king Shivāji arrived, and with him his son Sambhāji, as also his Ministers. 30. As the king viewed the scene, he saw the *Swāmi* sitting off at a distance. He therefore asked Akābāī what had happened. *She replied to the king:* 31. "Samartha says that his elder brother at Jamba has left his body and gone to his home above. 32. But the valley of the Godāvarī is far from here, and how could a man come from there this very day? I cannot understand how Samartha heard of the event?" 33. Without

SHIVĀJI INVITES RĀMDĀS TO PARALĪ

55 After the festival had ended the king made a request of Rāmdās "I have a great desire in my heart that you should come up into the hill of Paralī" 56 Thus saying, the king made a prostrate *namaskura* before him "I am going to feed a hundred thousand so satisfy my wish." 57 Samartha replied 'I am very happy here in the forest, why take me up to the hill? Tell me the true reason of it 58 In reply, the king said I have built there a temple to Rāma May your greatness cause all the saints to come there ' 59 The *Svāmi* answered "I understand now your wish ' Then in accordance with the king's purpose, Rāmdas repeated an *abhanga*.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

60 After repeating this *abhanga* the *Svāmi* arose ready to go The king could not contain his joy, and had preparations for the journey made at once 61 Musical instruments began to sound kettle drums were beaten, the whole army was made ready and halted near the king 62 A noble looking elephant was brought and Samartha was seated on it under a canopy The king stood behind him waving the fly-whisk, and the *bhaktas* shouted aloud the names of God 63 All Rāmdas disciples and followers, some hastening in front on foot, others in horse-drawn carriages who did not have the strength to walk formed the procession. 64 There were many chariots and carts, in which some of the disciples were seated On that day they accomplished the 28 miles from the Vale of Chaphala, and arrived at the village of Paralī (below the fort) 65 Rāmdas and his party encamped comfortably on the bank of the Ūrvashī river All engaged in bathing and repeating prayers, fulfilling their regular religious habits 66 Samartha bathed, and the king brought to him the things required in worship Kalyana then began the

ceremony of worship, and so sat in his holy garments. 67 Rāmdās was clothed in the yellow robe A costly turban was bound on his head On his forehead the saffron marks were drawn, and a garland of flowers was placed around his neck. 68 Platters with incense and light, and costly offerings were placed before him Kalyana then sang a hymn of praise and all bowed prostrate before him 69 While this worship of his *sadguru* was going on the king remained standing with his hands joined palm to palm After the hymns of praise, he reverently made him a *namaskara*.

70 In the meantime the preparation of food was completed and the Brahmans arrived after taking their bath. They dined in the same line with Samartha All the disciples also dined 71 The *Swāmi* wore a garment woven with gold and silver thread and over him he drew a shawl of four breadths and eight borders The king brought an ornament of pearls and placed it on his head

THE CLIMB UP TO FORT PARALĪ

72 With a cloak around his neck, Samartha sat in the palanquin The king Shivāji walked ahead with his shoes in his hands 73 Thus they climbed up the mountain, and all the multitude followed. Finally they arrived at the assembly hall, and Samartha was seated on the throne 74 The whole assembly sat down but the king, however continued standing with hands joined palm to palm Sugar was distributed to all and Brahmans were given gifts. 75 When night came, the army was sent away, and the king remained behind to serve his *Swāmi*, standing near him (ready to serve) 76 Samartha continued his prayers and worship according to his regular rule With love he pleaded with Rāma. Listen to it

(*Abhanga* not translated)

77. In songs of many forms Samartha referred to the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma], and finally waved lights before the Husband of-Sītā [Rāma] as he was put to sleep. 78. The king had arranged a bed, and Samartha slept on it. The king sat by his side massaging his feet with his hands. 79. Seeing the king was alone with him, Samartha gave the king the following command: "Bring all the saints who live in the Krishnā valley to a Brahman feast. 80. Also invite Tukārāma Gosāvī of Dehu, who is a God-loving, noble Vaishnava, and who has come as an *avatāra* of Nāmdeva to save the humble in heart. 81. Invite him here." At this command of Samartha's, the king replied with the following comment. 82. He said "I shall be able to send an invitation to all the saints in the Krishnā Valley, but Tukārāma is always indifferent to worldly things. His mind never thinks of material things. 83. The Brahman Rāmeshvara, living in Vāgholī, a pandit, learned in all the six *shāstras*, caused Tukārāma's manuscript of *abhangas* to be sunk in the river water, because of his hatred of him. 84. For thirteen days Tukārāma lay at the door of the temple fasting until his prayer was answered. The Husband-of-Rukminī [Krishna] took it out of the water perfectly dry. 85. His good fame having reached my ears I sent messengers to invite him to come here, but he would not come. Again I sent my Secretary. 86. Tukārāma was at that time at Lohagāva. Then I went myself to visit him. I put before him some trifling gifts, but he absolutely refused to take them." 87. Samartha replied: "Listen, O king. What does a saint want with money? Those who get caught in the snare of desires, lose touch with the Lord-of-Pandharī [Krishna]. 88. It is because I saw the strong desire of your heart, that I have come up here to the Fort. If he understands this, he will certainly hasten to come." 89. Hearing these words of his *sadguru*, the king was

THE KING GIVES A DINNER TO BRAHMANS AND SAINTS

111 The Brahmans sat in lines The king's Secretary worshipped them, offering them fragrant ointment, rice, and flowers Daintily cooked food was served on leaf-plates 112 The king sat at some distance, and personally oversaw the carrying out of the feast. No one in the very least lacked anything and all had their appetites satisfied 113 Thus the Brahmans were daily feasted. All were given *pānasupāri* and gifts of money. The king gave to each Brahman a rupee 114. In satisfying the appetites of Brahmans Rāma takes delight Samartha then dined along with the circle of saints.

115 When the sun had set, lamps were lighted on all sides The royal pavilion was flooded with light A great many torches were lighted 116 Pillows, mattresses, and mats and many kinds of carpets were spread Crystal glass lamps were burned, and there was also the light of wax candles 117 When all the people took their seats with the saints, *sādhus*, Brahmans, Vedic Shāstris and *Purānics*, many others also came to attend the *kirtana* 118 The *Sadguru* then said to the king 'The good people have now seated themselves to listen, so without any feeling of shame, perform a *kirtana* before them 119 A *kirtana* is the greatest service one can render to God God Supreme is fond of *kirtanas*. One should, therefore, gladly sing to Rāma with feelings of love 120 In this *Kaliyuga* the chief means of salvation is the singing with fondness the goodness of God [Hari] Such were the secret words with their deep meanings that Krishna repeated to Uddhava as told in the *Bhāgavata*. 121. So now as all the Vaishnava *bhaktas* are seated sing and dance before them. Let all the musical instruments accompany you, and fasten bells to your feet.' 122 Receiving his command from his *sadguru*, the king felt great joy in

his heart. Then making a courteous *namaskāra*, he began his performance of a *kirtana* 123 The king had committed to memory a great many of Ramdās' *abhangas*, which he used to sing daily when by himself, and loved 124 He had for a long time this desire to perform a *kirtana* before his *swāmi* It now came to pass without effort on his part 125. In order to have a lively *kirtana* he had brought *vinās*, cymbals, drums, flutes piccolos, and mouth organs, all good musical instruments 126 The king full of love, first reverently made a *namaskāra* to his *sadguru* Then bowing mentally to all the saints he brought Rama into his mind 127 As the king stood up to perform the *kirtana*, all the people were astonished The following is the *abhanga* the king repeated Let the saints listen to it with reverence

(*Abhanga* not translated)

128 Such was the *abhanga* that the king sang, along with *padas* and *shlokas* of many kinds He had gladly fastened bells to his feet and danced while he performed the *kirtana* in praise of God 129 He put away all shame, and thought of public approval, and gave himself to acts inspired by pure goodness The saints and *mahantas* watched him with pleasure It seemed a marvellous thing to them 130 In past *yugas* most distinguished Vaishnava *bhaktas* have become kings and in this *kaliyuga* truly it is the noble Vaishnava Shivaji who has become king 131. The saints and *mahantas* listened to his *kirtana* with great joy in their hearts But Gaga Pandita muttered to himself "Our king has gone crazy 132 He has discarded the words of Vyasa, and is singing in the language of Maharāshtra " This he thought to himself, but did not utter it aloud 133 "The king enables me to carry on my domestic affairs, he gives me unlimited money and garments." With that thought of gain the Brahman spoke no open word in opposition to the king

134. Such was the *kirtana* that the king performed, and all were absorbed in it He praised the glory of worship, and made saints and good men happy 135 Then at the request of Samartha, Venubaī stood up to perform a *kirtana* The king made a *namaskāra* at her feet and then sat down to listen intently 136 Venubāī then made a *namaskāra* to the *Svāmi*, and repeated *abhangas*. Her throat choked with the emotion of love Listen, you pious *bhaktas*.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

137 Such were the words Venubaī uttered, and recited *abhangas* in various tunes The assembly listening to her were lost in admiration. Finally there were the hymns of praise to Rāma. 138 Every day there were feasts to Brahmans, and at night the Hari *kirtanas*. A vast number of Vaishnavas had now assembled, and regularly there were new *kirtanas* to be heard 139 On the next day at the command of Samartha, Ākābāi performed a *kirtana* with her heart full of love 140 With the loud noise of the cymbals and drums it seemed as though a great flood of noise had been poured out There was a great clapping of hands and snapping of fingers The sky overflowed with the sounds 141 Ākabaī then sang some of the *abhangas* of Samartha in her *kirtana*. I will quote one or two in this chapter He who reads them will feel joy in his heart

(*Abhanga* not translated)

142 Thus in her enthusiastic love she explained the knowledge of *Brahma* The saints and other good people recognized the knowledge of Ākābāī, that lacked in no point.

143 At Samartha's command, Bahinābāī then stood up to perform She also glorified *bhakti*, and all who heard

her were pleased 144 Only Gāgā Pandita muttered to himself "One should *not listen to a service* of song performed by women ' Bahinābāī divined by insight the state of his mind, and so replied in verse.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

145 Her part being finished, it was applauded with loud shouts of God's names and the clapping of hands. The air overflowed with the sounds The assembly filled with love were full of joy

VĀMANA PANDITA PERFORMS A KIRTANA

146 Then at Samartha's command, Vāmana arose to perform a *kirtana*, he who in this *kaliyuga* came as an *avatāra* of Vyasa His delightful poetry is without comparison

(Vamana's verses not translated)

147 Thus Vamana performed his *kirtana* his songs correspond with the *Bhāgavata* in which the substance of the Vedas is related Hearing him the saints were delighted 148 The assembly shouted ' Victory, Victory '' *The saints were full of joy* Then the final hymns of praise were sung, and Krishna was waved with wave offerings

149 This book, the *Santavijaya*, is marvellous. It should be regarded simply as nectar *Fortunate Saints* partake of it with fondness, followed with belching (the sign of satisfaction) 150 Favoured by my good fortune, I have received what remained over from *the feast* Mahipati, in eating this, has found his joy in his satisfaction.

151 *Svasti* This book is the *Shri Santavijaya* By the mere listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled Let the fortunate, *God loving bhaktas* listen This is the twenty third delightful chapter

---

CHAPTER XXIV

THE MORAL VALUE OF THE STORIES OF THE SAINTS

1. If any one actually possesses a store of good deeds derived from unlimited number of births, such an one is fond of the stories of the saints, and listens to them with an intent mind. 2. In listening to these stories of the saints, the seeker after final Deliverance, feels his heart repentant for sins committed. Even his greatest sins are in consequence burned away, and he now walks about where goodness exists. 3. Seekers after salvation have no better authority than truths obtained from the history of the saints, and many, even women and Shudras, have taken to paths of worship through them 4. Even if accidentally the name of God comes to one's lips, that very instant the illusions of this earthly existence melt away. Rāma is the resting place for all. The blue-throated one [Shiva] lovingly repeats His name. 5. All the saints have but one opinion, and therefore the extraordinary glory of Rāma's name has been proclaimed It has the authority of the Great *Purānas*, as well as of the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Bhāgavata Purāna*.

OTHER DISCIPLES PERFORM KĪRTANAS

6. In the last chapter there was related the extraordinary story of how the God-loving *bhakta*, king Shivājī, collected all the saints on the hill of Parali. 7. He began the feasting of a hundred thousand. He every day served dainty food to the Brahmans. A great many Brahmans attended, and rejoiced the king. 8. He had Rāmdās as his *guru*, bestower of blessings. The king himself had been worldly minded, but by association with the good he became good. 9. The king put aside the sense of shame and performed a *kīrtana* in the presence of the saints.

Finally Vāmana *swāmi* arose, and waved the offering over the Life-of-Jānakī [Rāma]. 10. One watch of the night remained. Some then paid their respects to sleep, but whether awake, dreaming, or in dreamless sleep, Rāma was in their thoughts. 11. When the sun arose, the saints performed their early morning devotions in repeating Rāma's names. After the bathing, and devotions, they dined along with the Brahmans. 12. At the third watch of the day, while the sun was still shining, the *kīrtanas* were begun. The saints sat down, and the king sat opposite them.

NIMBARĀJA OF DAITHANA PERFORMS A KĪRTANA

13. Then Nimbarāja Bāvā of Daithana stood up to perform. All were extremely delighted with his performance. The noble Vaishnavas rejoiced. 14. He was a man who conferred blessings, a follower of Ekanāth. He was one whose *kīrtanas* pleased the Recliner-on the-serpent-Shesha [Vishnu]. 15. He was one who had committed to memory the entire poetry of Ekanāth. He repeated one of Ekanāth's *abhangas* with the expression of love. Listen to it, you pious good people

(*Abhanga* not translated)

16. Nimbarāja's power of expressing his love for God was extraordinary. As he sang the *abhanga*, he was choked with emotion. From his eyes flowed tears of love, thereby touching the emotions of his hearers. 17. He especially described the life of Krishna, which it would take too long to quote. The whole assembly, men and women, listened intently. 18. When the sun had set, hymns of praise were sung to Pānduranga. Samartha paid special honour to Nimbarāja's *kīrtana*.

RANGĀSVĀMĪ PERFORMS A KĪRTANA

19. After the evening devotions had been performed, the *kīrtanas* were begun. Rangāsvāmī arose to perform.

His expressions of love were extraordinary 20 Rangāsvāmī was a poet of great ability, very clever, and one able to arouse the nine emotions The saints as they listened were ready to render him full respect. 21 He had written a commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*, which was entitled the *Ranganāthī* Even to-day his tomb is honoured, and visited by all saints 22. He had composed verses on *Bhakti*, Knowledge, and Indifference to worldly things

JAYARĀMA SVĀMI PERFORMS A KĪRTANA

Then Jayarāma Gosavī stood up to perform a *kīrtana* with his expressions of love 23 Immediately the air resounded with by the loud sounds of those shouting the name of Vitthala All the people clapped their hands, and the *kīrtana* seemed like waves of sound 24 Jayarāma Krishnadāsa is famous the world over Let the saints listen with reverence to his poetic ability expressed in the following *abhanga*.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

25 Such were Jayaramasvami's blessed words, which were simply a mine of joy produced by love In listening to him, one's ears remained unsatisfied One's bodily consciousness disappeared 26 During the *kīrtana* there were loud shouts of God's name, that drove away sleep and drowsiness. The minds of all were intent to listen Yama [God of Death] was stirred to fear. 27 In the *kaliyuga* there was no means of salvation, so God became an *avatāra* in the form of saints They proclaimed the power of God's names and saved the universe 28 Listening to Jayarāma's *kīrtana* all hearts were delighted Then many other good men performed acts of worship with love 29. Among them Kalyāna Annāppā Gosāvī, a disciple of Samartha's, Jayarāma and Shivarāma also performed kīrtanas.

THE SAINT TUKĀRĀMA PERFORMS A KIRTANA

30 Samartha then said to Tukarama "Arise, Father, to perform a *kirtana* I have desired to hear you for a very long time It is also the heart's desire of all' 31 Hearing Samartha's request, the king was extremely delighted Then the noble Vaishnava made a *namaskāra* to Samartha and stood up to perform 32 To aid him in his *kirtana*, he had four persons behind him to lead in the chorus They were such as had cast aside all the seductions of the worldly life, and had gladly chosen association with the good. 33 Namdeva the *avatāra* of Uddhava, had made a vow in his heart that he would compose a billion Marathi *abhangas* 34 Then Hari, the Husband of Rukmini, said to him 'In the *kaliyuga* the span of life is at the most a hundred years, and during that time there are many mishaps The vow you have made here cannot all of it be fulfilled now 35 Nāmdeva then said "O God Supreme, Thou must carry to completion my vow' As he continued his piteous cry, Krishna's pride was touched 36 Then Pānduranga (God) himself having taken pen and ink continuously wrote (for Namdeva), and then Shriranga (God) counted the number of *abhangas*. 37 He found it to be nine hundred and forty-four million, and in the end there were nine hundred thousands *abhangas* as *lalita*, still the desire of Namdeva (for composing more *abhangas*) remained just in thought; for, just then, he went to *vaikuntha* [Vishnu's heaven] 38. Of the vow of one billion verses there still remained fifty million and fifty one hundred thousand Therefore it was necessary for him to return to this world of mortals in the form of an *avatāra*. 39 This *avatāra* was the noble Vaishnava Tukārāma. He was the perfect *avatāra* of Nāmdeva To save the world he became a visible manifestation in form and attributes 40 On every occasion where he had to speak on material or spiritual themes he used the

abhanga metre. He never spoke otherwise. 41. So when Tukārāma stood up to perform a *kirtana* before Rāmdās' audience, the air overflowed on all sides with the sound of the loud shouts of Vitthala's name. 42. He repeated blessed *abhangas*, of which I will quote a few. If read with pleasure, the reader will feel the joy that comes from love

(*Abhangas* not translated)

43. Listening to Tukārāma's words all the saints expressed their approval. But Gāgā Pandita muttered to himself, and then openly said to the Brahmans: 44. "What Veda speaks of the praise of Hari? This Tukā, a Vaishnava of the Shudra caste, seems to me to be telling what is false." 45. To these words of Gāgā Pandita, Vāmanasvāmī replied and quoted a *shloka* approving of the praise of Hari. Listen to it, you pious *bhaktas*.

(*Shloka* not translated)

46. Gāgā Pandita was unable to reply to these words of Vāmanasvāmī, and so growled: "This is merely an assembly of fools. Every one of them expresses the same opinion." 47. When Tukārāma heard of this discussion he repeated some more *abhangas* I quote them here in this book. Let the saints listen to them with reverence.

(*Abhangas* not translated)

48. As people listened to Tukārāma's *kirtana*, they lost all consciousness of body. The king also became so intent in his contemplation that he really saw all things in the form of Hari [God]. 49. Tukārāma himself had no consciousness of possessing a body. And God forgot His divine nature. Both became one. The idea of being two disappeared. 50. Realizing this condition of his dear *bhakta*, God said to Himself: "Tukā has become of the same essence as myself. That means the loss of the joy that results from love. I cannot endure this loneliness.

51. If a mirror is placed before another mirror, no reflection of a form will be seen. So it is with me without a *bhakta*. The longing for the love of the *bhakta* is frustrated. 52. Although there are fruits as sweet as nectar to the taste, still there must be a taster. The gods in heaven realize what it is to be without *bhaktas*. 53. It is my *bhaktas* who understand the glory of my divinity; so, if he and I become one, then the possibility of my praise is defeated. 54. Under such circumstances whoever will fall into distress, then who will call on Me to come to his help? I cannot bear the thought of such loneliness." Such was the thought of God-Supreme. 55. "In such a case why should I become an *avatāra* from *yuga* to *yuga*? And then how can mankind be saved? Many will drown in the sea of this worldly existence." 56. Realizing this fact, Krishna brought Tukārāma back to bodily consciousness. In a form visible to him, God spoke to him. Listen to it with reverence, you pious folk.

57. "In the performance of the *kīrtana* the whole night has been spent, and the sun has now arisen. Let the torchlight be waved." Thus spoke the Lord of Heaven. 58. Hearing these words, Tukārāma became at once conscious of his body. God and His *bhakta* became two persons. Listen to an illustration of this fact. 59. When the Ganges flows in full flood, it becomes separated by an island into two streams. It appears to people as two rivers, but there are in reality not two rivers. 60. The apparent two, from beginning to end are but one river. Only in the midst of the stream does there appear to be two rivers. But to the sight and to the touch they are one and same, and alike purify man from his sins. 61. So, for the salvation of the world, God and His *bhaktas* take separate names, but in their hearts there is no difference between them. This the saints have experienced.

62 Let us turn again to what had occurred The God loving Tukā came to bodily consciousness Then the Lord of Heaven, the dearest friend of the saints, spoke (through Tukārāma)

(*Abhanga* not translated)

63 Knowing the desire of Tukārāma, Pānduranga said to him 'I, the Infinite one will fulfil all the desires of your heart' 64 These words of the Lord of his *bhaktas* caused great joy to Tukārāma's heart He then lighted the lamps for the wave offering, and waved them over the Husband of Rukmini [Krishna]

65 There is no difference between God and His *bhaktas* What difference appears is no difference at all But through the delight caused by the name of Vitthala, men dance carried along by the stream of love 66 So seeing Tukārama s love for God everybody began to dance. Even the king along with his Ministers joined in the dancing 67 Saints *mahantas* Brahmans and the Vedic panditas began to dance accompanied by the music of the drums cymbals and flutes The enthusiasm was extraordinary 68 Women Shudras and other classes, adults well brought up children even the Muhammadan servants of the king began to dance moved by their joy 69 As Krishna danced among the cowherds all the three worlds began to dance So it happened now as Tukārāma the God loving saint danced 70 No one now possessed the consciousness of body The whole world seemed but Vitthala And gods, unseen by men came to watch the scene 71 While this dancing with love and reverence was going on, the four watches of the night passed Then loudly shouting the names of Hari Tukarāma made obeisance to the saints

72 Rāmdās then sprang forward and gave Tukārāma a tight embrace Both embraced one another They could not restrain their love 73 One was the Sun the other the

Luminary. The one was nectar, and the other the drink of the immortals. *As to their names these were two, but they were one in heart There were no longer two* 74 *So Rāmdās gave an embrace to the bhakta* Tukarama. It is impossible to describe their love for one another The function of the mind came to a standstill 75 The *bhaktas* now shouted cries of "Victory, Victory' The saints were *full of joy* Sweets were distributed to all, then all departed to their several places 76 *All performed their baths* and devotions The Brahmans were feasted At night recitations began before the seated company of saints

RĀMDĀS PERFORMS A KIRTANA

77 Finally Ramdās stood up to perform a *kirtana*, and all were delighted A great crowd gathered to listen to his *kirtana* 78 A great many persons stood behind Samartha *to lead in the chorus All had come with* their instruments, and stood lovingly behind him 79 The king stood behind Ramdas, and all the saints sat facing Ramdās How can I describe the good fortune of Ramdas? He was the visible *avatara* of Maruti 80 In his *kirtana the joy of love was evident Samartha repeated* many *abhangas* I quote one of them in this chapter Listen, all of you

(*Abhanga* not translated)

81 Such was the theme of Rāmdās' *kirtana* and as people listened, they realized its truth The saints became absorbed in it *Others did not understand it* 82 Samartha now announced what was pleasing to everyone I also have the keen desire to listen continually to the *kirtanas* of Tukarāma.' 83 For a whole month, therefore, by day there was the *feasting of Brahmans, and Hari kirtanas at night* The hearts of all were full of joy.

84 The private secretary of the king now informed him that he had fed one hundred and twenty five thousand

So the final gifts were made to the Brahmans, and the saints were duly worshipped 85 The noble Vaishnavas were made to sit on the throne and the king washed their feet Garlands of *tulsi* leaves were placed around their necks and the dark marks on their foreheads 86 The king having thus worshipped them he gave garments to every one Samartha then spoke which the hearers should listen to with deep respect

PARALĪ FORT IS RENAMED SAJJANAGADA

87 ' This place is especially fortunate. Many saints have assembled here This therefore should be called Sajjanagada (Saints Fort) This was Ramdās suggestion to the king 88 The king then called his private secretary and had him write on paper that it was his wish that the name of the Fort henceforth was to be Sajjanagada.

THE GATHERING AT SAJJANAGADA BREAKS UP

89 The crowd of pilgrims now broke up All the saints and good people started for their homes. The king was very sorry to see them go for he had feelings of love for them 90 In order to worship Tukārāma the king had brought golden coins (mohurs and hons) As soon as Tukārāma heard the rumour of this he left without anyone s knowing of it 91 The king came and told Rāmdās ' Tukārāma has gone away I have not been able to do for him what I greatly desired to do. 92 I would have had a deed written giving him the revenue of four towns Such was my great desire ' 93 Rāmdās listened to the statement made by the king and then heartily laughed. Said he To saints a kingdom over the Three worlds (Heaven Earth and Hell) seems worth only a straw 94 Tukārāma has kicked away the mighty *siddhis* (accomplishments personified) and worships Pāndurangā without a desire for himself He has no liking even for

the Four Forms-of-Deliverance What chance then have the common earthly desires (to attract him)? ' 95 Rāmdās was very happy as he realized Tukārāma's point of view, clearly proving that he had become an *avatara* to save the universe 96 The king's heart had feelings of love He looked upon the *sadguru* as if God Supreme At his feet all sacred waters were to be found There was no place for an opposite thought

RĀMDĀS REFUSES SAJJANAGADA AS A PERMANENT HOME

97 One day king Shivaji pleaded with his *sadguru* with many arguments Make your permanent residence here at Sajjanagada, and do not go elsewhere " 98 To this Samartha replied ' One should not remain in one place If he does, he loses his freedom and falls into bondage This is the principle governing a saint 99 While wandering about from sacred place to sacred place, where people might wish him to remain, he should not remain long in such a place One should not do what deliberately creates a longing ' 100 Hearing Samartha's reply, the king made him a *namaskāra* and understanding what was in his *sadguru s* heart he no longer pressed him in the very least 101 However Samartha did remain at Sajjanagada but when he grew homesick, to the forests he would go, and come back whenever he felt the desire to do so 102 Rama was in his mind, Rāma was in his heart Among men it was all Rama, in the forest it was all Rama He sang of Rama he contemplated Rama, and Rāma became attached to Ramdās through love 103 Among the animate and inanimate gods and demi-gods in several places, and living beings, Ramdas saw nothing but Rama in visible form

RĀMDĀS VISITS MOUNT YAVATESHVARA

104 One day Rāmdās started for Yavateshvara, for he had a desire arise in his mind to worship Shiva (in his

temple there) 105 It gave him great delight to see the *extraordinary formation of the mountain* He then went to worship Shiva (in his temple) and there praised Him as follows

(*Abhanga* not translated)

106 Thus Ramdas described the features of Shiva. He worshipped him with all the usual *rites* and then taking his leave, departed 107 He returned to Sajjana gada where he remained a few days

THE GODDESS BHAVĀNI OF PRATĀPAGADA

Here is another event that happened to which good people must listen 108 The king had installed an image of Bhavāni (Shiva's wife) at Pratāpagada. Even Brahmadeva and the other gods are unable to conceive of her real form 109 But she appeared in the middle of the night before Rāmdās in all the brilliancy of her glory She seemed a mass of light. 110 Rāmdās made her a *namaskara* and enquired Who are you Mother? She replied "I am the original *Māya*. Do you not recognize me? 111 The goddess said to Rāmdās How is it you have forgotten me? O mighty man you have not described me (in your verses) Why have you disappointed me? 112 Your lips have with love sung the praises of all the gods but I am sorry on account of (my omission) Tell me the reason of this 113 Rāmdās replied "You are the Primal Force, the Mother Illusion No one can describe any one without the power that is of you 114 It is said that the Supreme *Brahma* is beyond description. Whatever I have therefore said of it is through your power Hearing Rāmdās words the goddess replied 115 "Philosophy teaches that I have an infinite variety of forms, but when you describe my attributes I listen with satisfaction. 116 Rāmdās said to the goddess " If you will remove four pearls from your necklace and make

them into earrings for me, I will describe you (in my *kirtanas*)." 117. The Goddess listened and agreed. In a moment she vanished out of sight. Then she appeared at Pratāpgad, and performed a strange deed. 118. She assumed the form of a goldsmith, and sat making earrings. All this Rāmdās understood through telepathy. And then himself appeared in the Goddess' temple. 119. The Goddess said to him: "There are guards at the door, and locks on the doors. How were you able to enter in the middle of the night? Tell me at once." 120. Rāmdās replied: "O Mother, just as you came in here, so I also entered in the same way. Your mind must recognise this." 121. Hearing him say this, the Mother of the universe, was astonished. Then she put in his ears the earrings she had made. 122. Rāmdās then sang to her praise. I quote his *abhanga* in this book. Philosophers and those of experience will comprehend its meaning and full relationship of words and phrases.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

123. With this praise of her, the Primal Mother was delighted. Rāmdās then returned to Sajjanagad without any one's knowing about his going and coming. 124. He lay on his mat and slept.

Now turning to Pratāpgad, listen to what happened there. 125. As soon it was dawn, the priests removed the locks of the door, and brought out the ornaments used in the worship of the Goddess. 126. As the temple-keeper counted the number of jewels, he found four pearls missing. He questioned the priest. He replied that he knew nothing about them. 127. This resulted in a great hubbub. Finally the officer in charge of the fort came, and began to make arrests. He even sent word to the king. 128. The king came to see and to worship the Goddess. There he saw the instruments of the goldsmith lying about in the

temple. He asked the Officer in charge of the fort, who had entered into the temple. 129. Receiving the king's permission the officer began to beat the people and to confine many in prison. The king then went back to his place. 130. As the king slept that night, the Goddess Bhavānī appeared to him in the form of a maiden, and spoke to him in a dream. Listen to what she said, you pious folk: 131 "I made the earrings with my own hands, and placed them in Rāmdās' ears. If you think this is untrue, then go and see for yourself." 132. The Goddess having told the king of her deed, he awoke. He sent a letter to Pratāpgad that the pearls are in their proper place. 133. He then came to Sajjanagad and lovingly made a *namaskāra* to his *svāmī*. In his ears were earrings made of four pearls. The king recognized them, and was happy over it. 134. The king called Akābāī aside, and told her all about what the *Svāmī* had done. Kalyāna remarked: "No one can fully comprehend the possibilities of an *avatāra*." 135 The king joined his hands palm to palm, and stood before his *svāmī* enquiring: "Who put the earrings of four pearls in your ears?" 136. It pleased Samartha to relate the whole happenings to the king. Said he: "Bhavānī of Pratāpagada was pleased to give it to me." 137. The king enquired: "How were you able to enter the temple where she was? The doors were locked. I have doubts about your story"? 138. To this remark of the king's Samartha made answer: "How can one of pure mind, and freed from the bondage to this worldly existence, be bound? 139. One who sees all the animate and inanimate as Rāma, he can go anywhere in this universe. If anyone has the full favour of Rāma, he can show himself where he cannot be seen." 140. As the disciples heard him say these things, they marvelled. The king, with sincere feelings, fell at his feet, saying: "One cannot comprehend his power."

141. This book, the *Santavijaya*, is full of delights. It may be regarded as nectar. If one partakes of it with fondness, he will never suffer from the disease of this worldly existence. 142. God-loving ones partake of this divine substance. The wicked are surrounded by a devilish substance, and will not drink it, though compelled by an outside force. 143. The Merciful-to-the-lowly, the Lord-of-Pandharī, is fond of the stories of the saints. Mahīpati is but his stamp. He says what he is taught to say.

144. *Svasti.* This book is the *Shrī Santavijaya.* By the mere listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the twenty-fourth delightful chapter.

CHAPTER XXV

STORIES OF THE SAINTS LEAD TO GOD

1 The gods are fond of nectar, and enjoy continually drinking it Just so the God loving people listen with pleasure to the stories of the saints. 2 When the *chātaka* bird is thirsty, it longingly watches the cloud Just so the God loving *bhakta* regards with love the stories of the saints. 3 Just as the *chakora* bird becomes crazy for the nectar of the moon, so good men rejoice in listening to the stories of the *bhaktas* 4 Or to use the illustration of a miser who buries his money He has to wander about on business but his mind is on his buried treasure He never forgets it 5 So while the God loving people go about their daily avocations, they are thinking of what they have heard They are always remembering the stories of the saints, which they have heard 6 If they have this reverent desire to listen day and night, the Husband-of Rukmini [Krishna] will meet with them, taking a visible form 7 Such is the promised blessing given to this book This is really not an untrue statement I state this from my own experience

RĀMDAS SAVES A RICH MERCHANT FROM SHIPWRECK

8 In the last delightful chapter there was related how Shivāji, the God loving *bhakta*, sent out many messengers inviting the Saints who were dear to him to Sajjangad 9 How he took his *sadguru* to Parali [Sajjangad] and gave a feast there to a hundred thousand persons. How he made an offering of the place to his *sadguru*, with full sincerity of heart

10 It now happened that once Samartha was casually sitting on his mattress, when a strange event happened

Listen to it with reverence. 11. Samartha had a very distinguished disciple. He was a rich merchant. He had gone on a merchant vessel, and brought back a large cargo of goods. 12. Now it happened by Fate that his vessel was sinking in the sea. The water was already pouring into the vessel. He then made a vow: 13. "Victory, Victory, to Rāmdās, *Samartha*. Come at once to my rescue. *If you will save the ship from sinking, I will certainly give you a tenth of its value.*" 14. While he was thus thinking, Samartha appeared there. The vessel quickly reached the shore, and the merchant embraced Rāmdās' feet. 15 Said he: "You have granted the object of my vow." So saying, he placed his head at Rāmdās' feet. As he looked up, he could see his *sadguru* nowhere. 16. Overcome with astonishment, he exclaimed: "The Cloud-of-mercy has protected me" The merchant then taking the money which he had vowed, started at once for Sajjangad.

17. Turning now to Sajjangad. Samartha had been sitting accompanied by his disciples. Suddenly the people looking at him noticed that his sleeve-less jacket-cloak was dripping wet 18. So Vāmanasvāmī said to Samartha: "You have been sitting here for a long time. How is it that your cloak is wet? Tell us truly." 19. Samartha answered: "Listen. A vessel was sinking in the sea. A pious passenger made a vow. I rescued him, and have just returned. 20. My cloak became wet with the sea-water at that time." Hearing him say this, all marvelled. 21. The king expressed his astonishment: "How could he have gone from here?" The pious accepted Rāmdās' statement as true. Those who were not *bhaktas* regarded it as false.

22. On the next day the merchant arrived to meet Rāmdās. He brought with him ten thousand silver rupees,

and with his own hands placed them before Rāmdās. 23 "I was just going to drown in the sea with all my cargo, when O *Svāmī*, you appeared and fulfilled my vow You saved the vessel from shipwreck, and saved me. 24 You manifested yourself to me in my helplessness, and I placed my head at your feet But at the same time I looked up, and you were nowhere to be seen. 25. I had vowed to myself to give you a tenth of the cargo (in money) if saved, and here I place this mere *tulsi leaf* (a trifle) at your feet, O *Svāmī*, use it as you think fit" 26 As the merchant thus spoke, all were greatly astonished They exclaimed 'No one can know the limits of the *sadguru's* powers "

27 Rāmdas then called the Brahmans to him, and at once divided the money amongst them. Seeing such generosity on Rāmdās part the merchant marvelled greatly 28. The *Svāmī* said to him "Your money has been given to those worthy of it Aside from the name of Rāma why should I accept anything which will only create hindrances? 29 *Shrī* Rāma is my father and mother, and I think continually of His feet alone All others are but impediments, therefore their help is negligible 30 At the end of the ages everything will be destroyed, but the name of Rāma is imperishable As Rāmdas uttered these words, the merchant fell at his feet

A MUHAMMADAN ATTACK ON PARALI FORT DEFEATED BY MONKEYS

31 After some days had passed, a Muhammadan army arrived and started operations to capture Sajjangad 32 But do what they could, Sajjangad did not fall into their hands The Muhammadans, therefore, adopted other tactics They climbed a neighbouring mountain, and from there they fired upon Sajjangad 33 Cannons were fired furiously, and great numbers of cannon ball fell

on the fort. Houses were wrecked by them, and everyone became frightened. 34 When Samartha learned what was going on, he contemplated Maruti Then suddenly there appeared on Sajjangad an army of monkeys. 35 They lifted up huge rocks and threw them on to the Muhammadan army. Many of the Muhammadans were killed and the general was puzzled to know what to do 36 Remarking that the enemy's efforts were very effective, he made the state of things known to Aurangjeb He reported "A Hindu *fakir* lives in the fort. He has called together many monkeys 37 They lift up huge rocks, and hurl them up into the sky ' The Emperor replied "Bring that *fakir* at once to meet me ' 38 The general replied "The *fakir* is under no one s authority He has the signs of a holy man. So all men say 39 Aurangjeb then issued a command that Ramdas was not to be harmed in the least As soon as this order was received, the invading army ran away

40 When king Shivaji heard of this incident, he came with his army to see, and worship Ramdas He then learned of the heroism of the monkey army 41 The king was greatly pleased Said he Samartha's doings are most extraordinary I do not quite understand how it was that the invading army was overcome.'

RĀMDĀS TELLS SHIVĀJI THAT HE WILL SOON DIE

42 Soon after this Samartha took Shivaji aside and told him that his life was near its end Hence, be careful of what you do 43 Concentrate your thoughts on Rama. Do not let your heart be entangled in other things The king replied "I have already offered to Him my body, my mind and my property 44 The king went back to his palace, and gave gifts in accordance with the requirements of the *shāstras*, and departed this life on the day prophesied by his *Swāmi* 45 The king had installed his son Samā

bhāji as king over the realm, and then lovingly bringing the form of Rāma to his mind, he became absorbed in his essential form 46 Sambhāji at once performed the funeral rites of his father, and then came to Sajjangad With love he visited his *Svāmi*, and prostrated himself before him. 47 He brought to mind his father His eyes filled with tears The Svāmi remarked to him "Such events are the usual in this world 48 Even the most distinguished *avatāras* have gone to the other world. Put aside now your sorrow, and lovingly worship Rāma.' 49 The king Sambhāji took leave of the *Svāmi*, and returned to his capital. Let the hearers listen with reverence to what happened afterwards

RĀMDĀS PROPHESIES HIS OWN DEATH

50 After some days had passed, Rāmdās called together all his disciples. The *Svāmi* said to them 'I am going now to my Home 51 The distinguished grandson of my elder brother is at Jambs, Gangādhara by name He should be called here to be installed as head of our cult ' 52 The disciples replied 'He is a householder One who is holy and unmarried should be appointed over our organization' 53 *Samartha* had written a letter to Gangādhara, and had placed it inside his copy of the *Dāsabodha*, and so it had not been sent to Jamba. 54 So he said to Ākābāi 'Install Gangādhara over our Society organisation. There should be no other thought" 55 There were other distinguished disciples and followers in the Krishnā Valley. Letters were sent to them to [come at once 56 Hearing the news all the circle of disciples assembled. They placed their heads on his lotus feet and sat beside their *Svāmi* 57 To the assembled disciples Samartha said "The time of my departure is at hand. Whatever instructions I am going to give you, they are to be held in your minds as your duty 58 You are to gain

your livelihood by begging You are not to perform religious services for hire To do so would bring stain on our order 59 If our order greatly increases in number, and some worthless fellow becomes ashamed to beg, his search after the supreme-spiritual riches is all false He is not worthy to be spoken of as belonging to the rank of *sādhus* 60 He may lay claim to definite knowledge and preach with his lips things which he himself believes. He may express disgust at the worship of a visible image of God Then such an one is openly censured '

(*Abhanga* not translated)

61 "So long as this body lasts one should hold in love the visible image of God It should be duly worshipped according to the *Shāstras* and regularly 62 The festival connected with the birth of Rama and Maruti should be observed When Vaishnavas come to visit the *math* [religious house] they are to be received with reverence 63 Holding a state of mind indifferent to worldly things, the daily food should be obtained from begging No one is to be forced to give Only that is good which is cheerfully given 64 Wherever a *math* has been built, *dedicated to Rama there kirtanas should be regularly* listened to And the *Dasabodha* should be read there with a desire (to make it known) 65 May all of you always regularly worship Rama By doing so the net of *Māyā* will be broken All this is my special instruction to you '
66 Hearing these words *of their guru, the disciples made* him a prostrate *namaskāra* Their eyes filled with tears, as they remembered his life among them

AN IMAGE OF RĀMA, SITA AND LAKSHMANA SENT TO RAMDĀS

67 Just then an image of Shri Rama, with Sitā and Lakshmana was sent by a disciple to Rāmdas from the Karnātaka country It was beautiful in form, and in accor-

dance with rules prescribed by the *shāstras* 68 When Rāmdās saw it, he was exceedingly pleased. He, however, said "Let it remain for the present in its box. It will be of use hereafter"

RĀMDĀS WISHES NO TOMB FOR HIMSELF

69 Samartha charged Kalyana as follows "I do not wish you to erect a tomb over me but when the temple to Rāma is finished the images must be installed in it 70 This remark of Samartha's made all the disciples troubled They said ' At least your *pādukās* [foot-impressions] should be installed here This will give satisfaction to all 71 Then Dattu came forward with his hands joined palm to palm, and pleaded again and again with Ramdas ' Give permission to erect over you a tomb This is truly the strong desire of every one ' 72 *Samartha* answered Why do I want a tomb ? You are needlessly putting a hindrance in my way Listen I will tell you truly what I think 73 If you erect a tomb for me then Rāma will be neglected All the temple officials will direct the worshipping to my *pādukās* 74 Hearing this reply of their sadguru all remained silent But Dattobā Gosavī kept making *namaskāras* and pleading 75 O Cloud of-mercy, give permission to us to erect a tomb over you Then Rāmdās replied, and you, pious, good people listen to what he said 76 " You may build a stone cellar, and in it erect my t mb Build the temple of Rāma over it, and in it install the image of Rāma ' 77 To this permission of their *Swāmi* all assented, and with true sincerity they made him *namaskāras* They were unable to restrain their loving hearts. 78 Rāmdās said to all ' In the month of Māgha (February) on the ninth day of the da k fortnight at noon I am going to my Home (in Heaven) Let all of you take notice 79 The news of this prophecy by *Samartha* spread far and wide A

great many people therefore, came to Sajjangad to see and worship him 80 From the first day of the dark fortnight of the month of Māgha, feasts were given to Brahmans At night Hari kirtanas were held before the assembled saints and other good men. 81 The disciples went from town to town, and brought their begging bags back full of the food given them All this he expended for the Brahmans until every one was satisfied

THE DEATH OF RĀMDĀS

82 For eight days this festival was celebrated Then came the day for his departure The king Sambhāji learned the news, and came to be present 83 The whole company of his disciples bathed, and then looked into the face of their *Swami* They remarked to one another We shall never see him again" And their hearts were full of grief 84 Finally *Samartha* bathed and placed the twelve marks on his forehead made of clay and a *tulasi* garland around his neck All this in a happy mood 85 He sat down in the especially pleasing posture called *padmasana* and at the moment of death he prayed to Rama Listen to how he expressed his deep emotion

(*Abhanga* not translated)

86 As he thus brought Rama to mind Rama suddenly appeared there He was in a visible form dark complexioned, and embraced Ramdas. 87 And Ramdas left his body, with firm faith in His form of God supreme, who is both *saguna* [with qualities] and *nirguna* [without qualities] and also the pervader of the universe 88 ' Victory, Victory to Rama all at that moment shouted The gods sitting in their chariots of light came to see the sight with their own eyes 89 Hosts of Gandharvas, Kinnaras Brahmadeva Varuna and Kubera unseen continued to shower unlimited flowers upon him 90 Indra

and Brihaspati sang the praises of Rāmdās They said: "For the salvation of the world Māruti has descended as an *avatāra* 91. After a life of happy deeds he has now become one who is absorbed into the divine nature. But he has also left books of deep importance for the salvation of men" 92. Thus speaking, the gods returned to their several places, and the God-loving, pious people mourned in sorrow. 93. They remarked: "The king Shivāji must have had many good deeds to his credit that he went before his *Svāmī* We are unfortunate, in that we remain separated from the visible form of the *Svāmī*." 94. Thus deeply mourned Akābāi, Venubāi and Bahinābāi. So also all were in deep grief. 95 It was in Shaka era sixteen hundred and three (A.D 1681) in the *samvatsara* [sixty year circle] called Durmati that *Samartha* gladly left his body, and became one with Rāma. 96 Now followed the loud playing of musical instruments The noble Vaishvanas performed *kīrtanas*, and flowers and fragrant powders were thrown over his corpse 97. Loads of sandal wood were brought, and a great funeral pyre was made He was then given the sacrament of fire, while the disciples looked on with minds full of serious thoughts 98. They said: "Let us bring building stones and on the tomb let us place the *pādukās* [feet impressions]" While the people were planning about this, a very strange thing happened.

A VOICE FROM THE DEAD

99 On the third day when the people went to remove Rāmdās' ashes, they saw a stone slab in the pile of the funeral ashes, and on it were seen *pādukās* [feet impressions]. 100. On them was inscribed the name of Rāma Thirteen letters were distinctly seen Seeing this, all wondered, and " "One cannot know His extraordinary power."

101. As the people saw this miracle, they grieved all the more, saying: "O *Sadguru*, even Brahmadeva and

Shiva do not know the limits of Thy power 102 By Thy departure each moment seems truly as an age Our domestic life has been ruined, and we are now like wandering vagabonds 103 O Being of-supreme goodness, bring us to our end and take us to Thy Heavenly Home We have no dear friend, but Thee This O *sadguru* Thou well knowest

104 While in their love they were thus mourning, a strange and extraordinary event took place A voice came from under the stone slab Listen, pious folk, to what it said 105 It said 'Kalyana give attention. Take in hand pen and ink. I will repeat an *abhanga* Write it immediately on paper 106 As this voice arose from the slab all listened to it with reverence Kalyana was *Samartha's* secretary, and he wrote the *abhanga* without a single mistake —

1 'It is true my body is gone but I am now in the form of the universe Listen now to my helpful instructions I will mention them

2 Let not your hearts be troubled Carefully read my book [*Dasabodha*] It will point out to you the path to final salvation

3 Live forgetful of your bodies Do not commit deeds either good or evil By not committing them the doors of final salvation are to be found.

4 Says Rami Ramdas who is now forever in the form of the divine essence Contemplate *Shri* Rama without ceasing

107 Listening to this voice unconnected with a physical body, all felt a sense of peace And the *abhanga* that Kalyāna wrote down every one committed to memory 108 The slab of stone which was discovered with the feet impression on it was immediately installed just there, to

look at which removed the idea of separation from one's heart, and was also useful for worship. 109 The scriptural rites were then observed Gifts of many kinds were made Brahmans were honoured with feasts, and to every one some gift was given 110 Near the tomb [*samādhi*] a *kirtana* was performed, the *Dāsabodha* was read, and it became a custom for all thus to read it.

GANGĀDHARA SVĀMĪ INSTALLED IN RĀMDĀS' PLACE

111 A letter was sent to Gangādharasvāmī at Jāmba and he came to Sajjangad, and encamped by the river side 112 News was sent to Sātārā, and the king came with his army The king met Gangādhara and made him a *namaskūra*. 113 It became known to those on the Sajjangad that the new head of the order was encamped below. The disciples therefore went down to welcome him and bring him up on to Sajjanagada. 114 So, Akabāī, Venubāī, Kalyāna Annāppā Gosāvī and others started to go down. To what length shall I go in mentioning names? 115 All of these descended the mountain, and at once arrived at the river side Gangādhara was standing there, and they made him a *namaskūra* 116 They embraced one another All then sat on their respective seats They applied the fragrant black powder to his (Gangādhara's) forehead, and offered him flowers of various kinds

117 They then requested Gangādhara "O God, be pleased to sit in this palanquin." The musical instruments were then played, and all rejoiced. 118 Gangādhara sat in the palanquin The king walked in front of him Servants waved over him the fly whisks, and there were shouts of 'Victory, Victory' 119 Gangādhara made a *namaskūra* to Ramdās' seat, and withall the usual ceremonies the king also worshipped it.

120 Kalyāna had already started the erection of Ramdās *samādi* [tomb] The cellar was excavated, and

the temple was built over it 121 In front of the *samādhi* a large assembly hall was erected. Here there was continually the music of the *kirtanas* and many people came to see and worship 122 *Samartha's* store of good deeds was especially great. He excelled in his divine nature and as a super man The loud singing of his praise followed after him, and his followers became numberless

DEDICATION OF THE PARALĪ TEMPLE TO RĀMA

123 A vast quantity of materials was collected Distinguished Brahmans gathered, and messengers were sent to invite the noble Vaishnavas 124 The temple was completed to its very pinnacle Then began the warming ceremony of the temple The idol of Rāma had life put into it and it was anointed by vedic mantras 125 He was duly worshipped with the use of garments, ornaments, adornments, garlands of flowers, and sandalwood paste, incense, lights and the platter of lights 126 Dainty food was offered Him, and the supreme offering of money was placed before the Lord of Ayodhya [Rāma] accompanied with *namaskāras* A feast was then given to the Brahmans. 127 Just as an idol is worshipped, so this *samādhi* was worshipped. It was bathed according to the customary rites 128 Sandalwood paste and rice were offered. Incense and lights were waved Then making *namaskāras* with sincere hearts the people circumambulated the *samadhi* 129 This was followed by a feast to the Brahmans and all were given *pānasupāri* and favours The installation celebration lasted for five days and each day there were *kirtanas*

GANGĀDHARA SVAMI SUCCESSOR TO RĀMDĀS

130 Soon after these ceremonies Gangadhara was installed as head of the organization All rejoiced, and a very enthusiastic celebration of the event took place 131 Gangādhara *svami* was a man of gentle and quiet disposi-

tion He retained the kindly feelings of all. He put aside all ideas of differences in his administration of his high office

132 Akābāi made request of Gangādhara: "The festival of the birth of Rāma is near at hand. Take therefore all the necessary materials and come to the Chāphala Vale". 133 Accepting the suggestion, Gangādhar sat in a palanquin, accompanied by all his disciples. Loud music sounded, and the crowd of people was great. 134. There were many bands with banners, the reddish-yellow flags of Māruti. They arrived at the Vale of Chāphala and first went to visit and worship Rāma. 135. They entered first the assembly hall, and there prostrated themselves before Him. They worshipped Rāma with all due ceremonies, and an enthusiastic *kirtana* was held. 136. The festival lasted for ten days according to the precedent set by *Samartha*. Those appointed to their several offices performed their duties, and there was joy in every heart. 137. During the daytime there was the giving of feasts to Brahmans. Every night there was a *kirtana* performed. On the tenth day a dramatic presentation took place, and saints were honoured.

138 Then came the celebration of the birth of Māruti. His image had been installed in eleven villages. In all of them the festival was celebrated according to the custom laid down before.

KING SAMBHĀJĪ GIVES GANGĀDHARA GRANTS OF LAND

139. King Sambhājī besought Gangādhara as follows: "My father had formerly the desire to make grants of land to Rāmdās. 140. But Rāmdās was absolutely indifferent to worldly things, so he would not accept them. I have had these deeds made out. So I ask your Saintship to accept them." 141. The expenses of the organization were now great, and in order that it might con-

tinue without interruption Gangādhara accepted them. Those grants of land still continue 142 In each town where there is a temple to Māruti, there the revenues of eleven acres of land were given to carry on the worship of Māruti.

143. After the festival there at Chāphala the saints came to Sajjangad It was now the first anniversary (of Rāmdās' death) and a sacred gathering (in his honour was held) 144 In the month of Magha (February) on the ninth of the dark half of the month Ramdās had become the quality-less [*Brahma*] To celebrate this event a great crowd of pilgrims gathered, and enthusiastic *kirtanas* were held during all that occasion 145 The sacred services which were held were exactly like those held to celebrate the birth of Rāma. All his disciples gathered there and with great joy assisted on the occasion

146 Some of my hearers may have a doubt in their minds, and may put a question to the speaker "Who are to be called the followers of Ramdas? Tell us systematically the rules of the organization.' 147 Listening to the question of the hearer, the speaker answers "Read with feelings of love the book in which are the *abhangas* of Rāmdās 148 If you have before you the blessed words of the saints, you need no commentators When the sun arises in the East, you do not need the picture of the sun drawn on a wall 149 I, therefore, quote one of his *abhangas* From it you will understand the rules of the organization Let the saints bring its meaning to their minds" Thus speaks Mahipati to his listeners 150 This is Ramdas' *abhanga* regarding his guru discipleship descent from before the beginnings of time So if you read it you will understand who are his followers There is no doubt of this 151 The followers of Ramdas are distinguished men in the world They have written many

histories of that saint, known world-wide. 152. It is on their authority that I, a humble author, have spoken as best I was able. I have possessed great love for singing the praises of the saints, and so I could not restrain myself from writing. 153. What is the feeble light of a miserable fire-fly compared with the sun-light? So, I, dull-minded and foolish, prattle as best I can.

154. The stories of the saints are a nectar producing vine, that has spread over the earth. Pious hearers have tasted of it, and through them they have received the satisfaction of attaining Final Salvation. 155. O Shri Rāmdās, Mighty One. May my head be at your feet. The story of your life is an unlimited one, and yet I have written of it as best my mind is able. 156. The Husband of Rukmini [Krishna], who abides by the brink of the Shri Bhimā river, is fond of the stories of the saints. In the above *abhangas* I have signed my name as Mahipati as a matter of formality. The wise with experience will recognise this.

157. *Swasti.* This book is the *Shri Santavijaya*, by the mere listening to which the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, pious *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the twenty-fifth delightful chapter.

(Chapter 26 contains the history of Bābāji Bāvā of Arangāva. This chapter is not translated.)

(Chapter 27 was only recently discovered by Pandit Narhar R. Godoble of Poona. Its genuineness has been questioned, but its vocabulary and style are strongly in favour of its being the work of Mahipati, for a long time separated from the other chapters, but now brought back to its proper place. It contains stories of saints who were followers of Rāmdās. This chapter is not translated).

APPENDIX I

GLOSSARY OF MARĀTHĪ WORDS USED IN THE TRANSLATIONS AND OF WORDS WHOSE TRANSLATION PRESENTS DIFFICULTIES

It might have been possible to have used fewer Marāthī words in these translations, but where there is no English word that exactly expresses the Marāthī word, or where it requires a whole English phrase to express the meaning of a simple Marāthī word, it has seemed to me better to keep the Marāthī word, so familiar to India, and let the English reader learn its meaning by its context, or by the following glossary. English literature is already enriched by many Marāthī words. I see no reason why it should not still further enrich itself.

There are certain words that are untranslatable except by a long explanation; others, where even the English word conveys only a part of the Marāthī meaning. I have translated these words and expressions as best I could, but it seems worth while to include some of these words in a glossary in order that the reader, familiar with both languages, may understand why I have used the special English word or words, sometimes in opposition to Dictionary authorities, even Molesworth. Usage has to be considered, as well as etymological meaning. The glossary will furnish the examples that have suggested the above remarks. I have used Molesworth's definitions freely, as carrying authority.

A

Abhanga–A particular metrical composition in praise of the Deity. It is the popular metre of the poet-saints

in their hymns of praise, the *abhangas* of Ekanātha the *abhangas* of Tukārāma, etc

Abheda bhakta-A *bhakta* who has the conception of no-difference (*abheda*) between the *paramātmā* and the individual *ātmā* *Abhed-bhakti* is the worship of God in harmony with the conception of the identity of the *paramātmā* and the soul (*ātmā*) of the worshipper.

Achārya-Head of religious order or sect

Adhelā-A copper coin worth half a pice

Agnihotri-The priest who maintains the sacrificial fire

Amrita-Nectar The drink that prevents death.

Anugraha-Favour, grace, kindness, instructing in mystical verses of incantations

Anushthāna-Performance of certain ceremonies and works in propitiation of a god

Ārati-1 The ceremony of waving around an idol guru, etc, a platter containing a burning lamp 2 The platter and lamp waved. 3 The piece of poetry chanted on the occasion of the ceremony of waving expressing praise or worship

Āshrama-1 The abode of saints and rishis 2 The word is also applied to four conditions of living—the *Brahmacharya* or the period of chaste youth and study, the *Grihastha*, the householder in his married and secular life, the *Varaprastha* who as age comes on passes his worldly cares over to others and goes into the forest for meditation and the fourth the *Sanyāsi* who entirely abandons all worldly cares, delights and passions and is wholly absorbed in contemplation of the worship of God These four *āshramas* are considered the ideal life for a Brahman

Ātmā-The soul, the soul of the universe the human soul, the vivifying principle, the self, the ego. For clear-

ness the soul of the universe is spoken of as *parama* (supreme) *ātmā*, to distinguish it from the individual *ātmā*, the two, however, in Vedantic philosophy being identical *Brahma*, or the *Parama ātmā*, partially defined as *satchidananda* (existence, intelligence, joy) is the sole existing substance The universe, as it appears in animate and inanimate forms, with their special names, is but the form in which the *ātmā*, the *paramātmā* or *Brahma*, manifests itself The human soul, or *ātmā*, is therefore, only a form in which the *paramātmā* appears The great sentence, '*ahambramhāsmi*, I am *Brahma*,' is the conscious acceptance of the philosophic postulate of the oneness of the soul of the universe with the individual soul

Avatāra–Etymologically it means, "one who has descended" A divine *avatāra* is the coming down to earth of such a divine being, as for example, Vishnu in the form of Krishna or Rāma In Indian mythology, as well as in all popular conceptions, these *avataras* are for the sake of combating some evil condition or conditions in this world, or to save the world from its sin and misery

Human *avatāras* are also recognized (*mānava avatāra*), that is a good man who has died reappears later in some other good man, to carry on or to complete, the work of the former Ekanatha is spoken of as an *avatāra* of Dnyānadeva, and Tukārama as an *avatāra* of Namadeva Or Ekanatha for example, is spoken of as an *avatāra* of God, making him, therefore, both divine and human

B

Bachanāga–Poisonous root of the Gloriosa Superba.

Bhajana–1 Adoration or worship 2 Repeating the names of God as an act of worship. 3 A hymn, or verses sung in the worship of God

Bhakta–1. A worshipper, votary, or follower of; one devoted or attached to. While the above definition is etymologically correct, in usage by the poet-saints there is connected with it a moral idea. A *bhakta* implies a really pious man. A hypocrite is not a *bhakta*, though technically and outwardly he might appear to be one. 2. A special religious class devoted to the religious life.

As the different manifestations of God, and the various *avatāras* appeal differently to different minds, there is a personal choice as well as the traditional or family choice of the special manifestation of God. There is therefore, a *Vishnubhakta*, a *Shivabhakta*, a *Haribhakta*, a *Rāmabhakta*, a *Vitthalbhakta*, and so forth.

Bhakti–Literally, worship or adoration. It is the attitude of the *bhakta* towards God. It always implies a moral idea of sincerity and purity of worship, accompanied with love. Again and again the poet-saints affirm that there can be no *bhakti*- without sincerity and love *Bhakti* is, therefore, more than mere worship, which can be so easily a mere outward form. *Bhakti* must be the true feeling of the heart, of reverence, and love of God, whether expressed in outer forms of worship, or in the mental worship (*Mānaspūjā*).

Bhaktimārga–*Bhakti-mārga* the way of *Bhakti*. Three ways are recognized for the deliverance of man from the succession of births and deaths, with their sins and sorrows, and with their good deeds and joys, as well. The *Dnyānamārga* (The Way of knowledge) holds the highest place in the minds of philosophers, because when by true Knowledge Ignorance disappears, all causes of sin and sorrow disappear. The *Karmamārga* or Way of Works is recognized by the poet-

saints as a way, but a very hard way, and a very dangerous way. In the case of both of the above ways the danger is pride and with pride comes a fall. The safe way, the sure way, the easy way, for all high or low, is the *bhakti-mārga*, in which a man throws himself on the mercy of God, *bhakti* on man's part, and mercy, forgiveness, and salvation, on God's part. With *bhakti* sincere, and the consequent gift from God of *moksha* (salvation, deliverance), a return to this earth is avoided, and there is eternal life in the presence of God. Because it is a sure and easy way for all, the poet-saints give the *Bhakti-mārga* the highest preference. Although the word etymologically does not imply it, the usage of the poet-saints in strongest terms emphasizes the moral side of *Bhakti*, not only sincerity in *Bhakti*, but a pure ethical life is essential to the very idea of *Bhakti*. Ekanātha's writings are especially emphatic on this importance of internal and external moral purity.

Brahma—The one substance of which all existing things consist. *Brahma* is the substance of which all things exist. Existing things have names and forms (*nāma* and *rūpa*). That they exist and have *forms* and *names* is as real as is the real substance of *Brahma*. To consider these forms, however, as different from *Brahma*, making a duality is, due to *ignorance*, that ignorance personified being called *māyā* (which see).

Brahmachārī–A Brahman who observes the strictest chastity for a time or for life from a religious motive.

C

Chakora–A bird that is said to subsist on moonbeams. This idea is very frequently used in poetic figures and illustrations.

Charitra–Actions, deeds, proceedings, exploits, history.

Chātaka–A bird said to drink only from the clouds, hence always eager for the rain. The idea is very frequently used in poetic figures and illustrations.

Chiplā–A musical instrument, consisting of two sticks rattled together.

Chūla–A fireplace. In its simplicity it may be three stones so arranged as to have the fire between them, and the pot or pan resting on them, or a semicircular erection on earth to contain the fire in its cavity, and support the cooking vessel on its rim.

D

Dakshinā–Money or presents given to Brahmans and others on special occasions.

Darshana–Literally, sight, seeing, looking. In the religious usage of the word there is, however, much more than the physical sight, seeing or looking. There is an implication of respect, reverence and worship. There is no English word corresponding with this use of *darshana*.[1]

Dasarā–A festival commemorating the period of the year when the Marāthā Kings started out on their campaigns.

Dhotara–The garment worn by men, consisting of a long piece of cloth wound around the body, tucked in front at the waist and also behind, taking the place of the European trousers.

Divāli–The annual festival of lights.

Dnyāna–1. Knowledge in general. 2. Knowledge of a specific and religious kind, that which is derived from meditation and the study of philosophy; which teaches man the divine origin and nature of his im-

material portion, and the unreality of corporal enjoyments, sufferings and experiences, and the illusoriness of the external and objective universe and which sanctifying him during life from earthly attachments and fleshly affections, accomplishes for him after death emancipation from individual existence and reunion with the universal spirit. In some parts of India the word is proncunced *gyāna.*

Dnyānamārga–The Way of Knowledge (See *Dnyana*)

G

Gāyatri–A sacred verse from the *Vedas* repeated by Brahmans at their morning and evening devotions

Ghatikā–A period of twenty-four minutes

Ghāta–1 A mountainous range dividing countries 2 A pass or difficult passage over a hill 3 Quay, wharf, stairs, landing place (on banks of rivers or tanks) Hence applied by washermen, tanners, dyers Brahmans, etc , to their respective places of resort

Ghi–Clarified butter also known as *tupa* The butter is melted, thus removing the water that may be in it, and then preserved in jars

Guna–1 A quality, attribute affection or property whether of matter or mind a power, faculty, excellence, virtue a property inherent or an affection supervening in the most comprehensive sense 2 The constitution of created things as comprised in three *gunas* , *satva* (existence truth goodness, brightness, etc) *raja* (energy, passion, action etc.), *tama* (evil, darkness, ignorance etc) All created things are a mixture of the three *satvaguna* *rajoguna* and *tamoguna* and therefore, are spoken of as *saguna* (possessing these *gunas*) and *Brahma*, the *paramātmā*, is *nirguna* (unpossessed by these qualities) In God, in

good men, in good things the *satva* predominates. In evil men or spirits or demons the *tama* predominates. The *rajoguna* is in all as the activity of either the good or the evil, or both. In God all is *satva*, because it is the *satva that is in activity* (*rajoguna*). In man there is a mixture of the *satva* and *tama*, and the activity (*rajoguna*) makes man a mixture of good and evil, sometimes the good predominating, sometimes the evil.

Guru–A religious teacher; one who instructs in the *Shāstras*.

H

Harbarā–A vetch, gram. Cicer arientinum.

Haridāsa–Servants of Hari [Vishnu]. Worshippers of Hari. Wandering singers who praise the deeds of Hari.

J

Japa–The repeating of *mantras* or the names of God. A rosary may be used so as to know the number of times the *mantra* or names have been used. As this outer form requires an inner reality, *japa* stands also for meditation, for worship, for prayer, indeed for the true spiritual life of a man. The correlative of *japa* is *tapa* (which see). *Tapa*, literally religious austerity, is also extended in meaning to comprise the outer religious life of a man. *Japa* his inner religious life, and *tapa* his outer religious life.

Jiva Shiva–When *Jiva* and *Shiva* are thus used together, *Jiva* stands for the Individual *ātmā*, and *Shiva* for the Universal *ātmā*.

Jondhalā–A cereal plant or its grain. Hulcus sorghum.

K

Kadabā–The stalks with their leaves of the *jondhalā*, or *jvārī*, Hulcus sorghum, used for fodder.

Kailās–The Heaven of Shiva.

Kākinī–A weight of shells equal to 20 cowries.

Kaliyuga–The present, fourth age of the world, the evil age. Its duration is considered to be 432,000 years, after which the world is to be destroyed. The present year A. D. 1931 corresponds with the *Kaliyuga* 5032. The initial year is 3101 B. C. The four *yugas* are the *Kritayuga*, *Tretāyuga*, *Dvāparayuga* and the *Kaliyuga*. The four *yugas* together make a *Mahāyuga* (Great *yuga*) 4,320,000 years. It is this evil *kaliyuga* that has necessitated the frequent *avatāras* to check evil, and to save mankind from its effects.

Kalpa–A day of Brahmā, 432 million years of mortals

Karma–1. An act or deed. 2, Religious action, sacrifice, ablution, etc. 3. Destiny; destiny being only the allotment, to be enjoyed or suffered in the present life of the fruit of good and evil actions, performed in former lives. 4. Deed or action; as all actions through the laws of cause and effect determine the actions in the next life. *Karma* is equivalent also to fate.

Karmamārga–The law of works; the road to heaven through observance of rites and ceremonies and performance of virtuous deeds. (See *Dnyānamārga*, Way of Knowledge, and *Bhaktimārga*, Way of Devotion). The Way of Deeds. One of the three ways of Deliverance: *Dnyānamārga*, *Karmamārga* and *Bhaktimārga*.

Kathā–A story, fable, exploits of gods or heroes related with music and singing.

Kāvada–A bamboo lath provided with slings at each end in order to contain baskets, jars, etc. and carried on the shoulder. Used for carrying water, vegetables, etc.

Kavadi–A cowrie. A shell used in making small change.

Kirtana–Celebrating the praises of a god with music and singing. Reciting the names of the deity. In practice, however, it is a religious service of song. The leader has a topic which he delivers in song. He is accompanied with a chorus leader and musical instruments. Following their leader the audience may break out in ecstatic repetitions of the names of God, or of the lines of a chorus.

Kshetra–A sacred spot, a sacred city, a place of pilgrimage; also the human form

Kulkarni–A village officer who keeps public records and keeps the accounts of cultivators in their relation to Government.

M

Mahant–1. The chief or head of an order of Gosavis Bairagis, etc, a religious superior. 2. Applied to the head or leading man among panditas, devotees, etc.

Mahābhārata–The great epic relating to wars of the Pandavas and Kauravas, ascribed to Vyāsa as author.

Mahārāshtra–The great nation. The old name of the country occupied by the Marāthā people, now included in the Bombay Presidency.

Mana–Mind. According to Western psychology the mind is the soul itself viewed as thinking or imagining. Mana, however, is regarded as an organ (*indriya*) of thinking and imagining and not a part of the pure *Ātmā* (Soul).

Mandapa–An open temporary structure, made with bamboo or other poles, with cloth roof and sides erected for festal occasions, for marriages, *kirtanas*, etc.

Mantra–A text, prayer, hymn or verse, which possesses mystical or supernatural power.

Māyā–This word is usually translated "Illusion," but this is not a satisfactory translation Vedantic philosophy postulates that there is but one substance, called *Brahma* or *paramātmā* or *ātmā*. This substance appears in the form of the universe, and to the various forms there are names (*nāma-rūpa*) These forms are temporary and changeable, and with the change of form the name disappears. It is due to Ignorance that these forms are supposed to be distinct from the One Substance The reality of these forms is not denied, but that they are distinct from the One Substance is denied. That they are distinct, i e, that there is a duality, is the particular form of illusion which is indicated by the word *Māya* In usage *Māyā* becomes personified as the cause of the Ignorance (*adnyana*) which sees duality where is unity One of the stock illustrations is that of gold in the form of various ornaments, each with its own name That the gold appears in the form of various ornaments is not denied, but that ornamental forms are permanent and distinct from the gold is denied The ornaments can be melted, they disappear as ornaments, but the gold remains unchanged To think the ornaments were distinct from the gold would be through Ignorance (*adnyana*) and the cause of the ignorance, by a sort of personification, is *māyā*.

Modi–Is the cursive writing of the Marathi The old Ashoka alphabet of the inscriptions 250 B C, gradually developed in time into the *Devanāgari* used in transcribing Sanskrit literature, as also Marathi literature In business writing however, haste being important, and the pen being lifted from the paper as little as possible, it led to a change in the form of the *Devanāgari* letters, which to the casual observer seem a

different character, but which can be most easily traced back to the *Devanāgarī* origin. The tradition that *Modī* was brought from the south, or that it was the invention of Hemachandra in the 13th century, may be due to the character of the southern cursive writing, and it could well be that Hemachandra adopted it as the form for official documents. There is no doubt, however, that the *Modī* has developed from the *Devanāgarī* simply by rapid writing, with the lifting of the pen from the paper as little as possible.

Moksha–Deliverance of the soul from the body, its exemption from further transmigration, with all its joys and sorrows, sins and good deeds, and its absorption into the divine essence.

Mukti–Exemption of the spirit from further migration and the reabsorption of it into its source the divine monad, *Brahma*, the substratum and substance of universal being. This deliverance from births and deaths must be understood to include in the idea the deliverance from the sins and sorrows, even from the good deeds and joys of life, for each life is made up of these. The four forms of *mukti* are *sāyujyatā*, *salokatā*, *samīpatā* and *sarūpatā* (see *sāyujyatā*).

N

Namaskāra–Worship, obeisance, reverential or respectful address or salutation. It is performed by joining the palms, inclining the head and pronouncing the word *namaskāra*. A *sāshtānga namsakāra* is the prostration on the ground, so that eight (*ashta*) parts of the body touch the ground, and is the most profound method of showing reverence to God or man.

Nirguna–Nir-guna. Literally without a quality. *Brahma* or *ātmā*, *paramātmā*, the one substance which appears to us as the universe, cannot be described in human

words. It is indescribable (*avāchya*) While the one substance cannot be described, the forms in which it appears can be described, and their qualities determined. The forms with their names are, therefore, *saguna* (*Sa guna*) with quality God, as a personal being, Creator of the special form in which the universe appears, is recognized as one of the forms in which the one eternal substance appears God, therefore, is *saguna*, that is He has qualities which can be described in human understandable words *Brahma* is *nirguna*. God (*Ishvara*) is *saguna* The gods all *avatāras* idols and the visions of God are all *saguna* manifestations of the *Nirguna Brahma* or *nirguna atma* the *saguna Ishvara*, being but one of the many forms in which the *nirguna Ishvara* appears these are to be identified as the golden bracelet is identified with the gold of which it consists. The poet saints therefore in their hymns of praise their invocations, their worship, and their prayers, make no distinction They are addressed as well to the *nirguna* God as to the *saguna* God. This identity of the *saguna* and the *nirguna* is often asserted very definitely

Nivritti–Cessation from worldly concerns and engagements also Absorption into *Brahma*

O

Ovi–A stanza of a particular metre of Marāthī verse.

P

Pad–A variety of metrical compositions used in hymns or anthems Very many of the poet saints have written in this metre (See the *Padasangraha* in the *Kāvyasangraha* Series for examples)

Padukā–An impression of a foot on stone, worshipped as the trace of some god or guru

Pāna-supāri–A roll of the Piper-betel leaf with Areca nut cloves, lime, etc (See *Vidū*)

Pāp–Sin in the abstract, or an evil deed. It is the exact negative correlative of the word *punya*, goodness or holiness in the abstract, or a good or holy deed. That *pap* and *punya*, evil and good deeds, must receive a future reward of suffering or happiness is a part of Hindu philosophy, but this idea does not belong to the words themselves. Molesworth's Marāthī-English Dictionary of 1881, founded on the Marāthī Marāthī Dictionary of 1829, rightly defines these words. I differ absolutely from the notes on these words in Molesworth's Second Edition of 1857, and from its definition of the word *punya* as "merit", a meaning it never has had in Sanskrit, or in the whole course of Marāthī literature, until influenced by Molesworth's second edition See further discussion under *punya*.

Petha–A region or large division of a city. A manufacturing or a trading town. A market town. A ward of a city.

Pradakshinā–Circumambulation of an object, keeping the right side towards it These objects may be idols sacred trees, the *tulsi* plant, a temple, even a sacred city Keeping the object to the left would imply irreverence

Prahara–An eighth part of the day of 24 hours. A *prahara* is therefore, a period of three hours The *praharas* begin at sunrise, at six, hence *Don-prahara* (two-*praharas*) is noon

Prakriti–In philosophy *prakriti* and *purusha* are words that denote the material and the immaterial universe. *Prakriti* (Nature, matter, phenomenon) conceived as female, and *Purusha* (male the soul, life, activity) by their union make the whole universe, an anthropomor-

phic expression of the idea expressed in English as "matter and mind"

Prākṛita-In the usage of the Marāthā poet-saints the *Prākṛita* language means the Marāthī language As distinguished from the Sanskrit (the polished language), it seems the common vernacular of the people. As may be seen from the lives of the poet saints and their works, they had to encounter a certain amount of opposition against their Marāthī, or *Prākṛita* versions of the sacred Sanskrit texts (See Ekanātha's life *Bhakta-līlāmṛita*, Chapter 11)

Prārabdha-Deeds in former births determined the course of one's life in the birth previous to this Deeds in the previous life have determined the course of one's present life. Deeds in the present life will determine the life in the next birth. This is the law of *Prārabdha*.

Prasāda-1. Favour, graciousness, propitiousness 2 Anything (a fruit, flower, rice, etc) given by an idol, a guru, a saint as a blessing or a mark of favour 3 Food, etc., presented to an idol or a holy person to be distributed, thus honoured, among worshippers, etc 4. The sweetmeats and fruit distributed among the audience at the conclusion of a *katha*, *kirtana* or *puranic* reading

Punya-Goodness or holiness in the abstract or a good or holy deed Its negative is *pap*, or sin in the abstract or an evil deed In the definition of this word as also in the definition of the word *pāp* I differ absolutely from Molesworth's Marathi and English Dictionary, second edition of 1857 In a note it says 'The word bears not the feeblest implication of holiness, godliness or purity of spirit" On the contrary it implies all three And by its using the definition of "merit (not found in the edition of 1831), an idea foreign to the

word has since then been attached to this noble word. "Merit", meaning a future reward of a good deed, is no part of the meaning of the word *Punya*, which is simply goodness or holiness in the abstract or a holy or good deed. The idea of merit belongs to Indian Philosophy, but not to the word *punya*. Every *punya* will have its reward in the future, as will every *pāp*, but this idea is not in the word itself.

The first edition of Molesworth of 1831, founded on the Pandit's Marāthī-Marāthī edition of 1829, has the correct definition. See also Monier-Williams' Sanskrit dictionary under *punya* and *pāp*. The word *punya*, twice used in the *Rigveda*, many times used in the *Upanishads* and *Bhagavadgītā*, and all through old Marāthī literature, is the exact negative of *pāp*. It, in no single instance, means " merit " as implying a future reward.

Puranpoli–A wheaten cake with stuffing of coarse sugar, pea flour, etc.

Purāna–A particular class of Hindu sacred literature, generally regarded as eighteen in number. They deal with stories of the creation of the world, its destruction, its renewal of gods, goddesses, and heroes. The eighteen are *Brahma*, *Padma*, *Vishnu*, *Shiva*, *Linga*, *Garuda*, *Nārada*, *Bhāgavata*, *Agni*, *Skandha*, *Bhavishya* *Brahmavaivarta*, *Mārkandeya*, *Vāmana*, *Varāha*, *Matsya*, *Kurma* and *Vāyu*, but there are other lists of 18, slightly varying from this. Of the *Purānas* the *Bhāgavata*, giving the life and teachings of Krishna, has had the greatest influence on the thought and life of the Marāthā poet-saints.

Purānik–A Brahman well read in the *Purānas*. A public expounder of them. On account of the vast extent of

Sanskrit literature those who expound the sacred books have to specialize There are those who make a speciality of expounding some *Purāna* and are known as *Purāniks*

Purusha–See *Prakriti*

R

Rāmāyana–The great epic relating the exploits of Rāma ascribed to Vālmiki as author

S

Sadguru–Literally a true, or good *guru* (see *Guru*) While primarily the word applies to human teachers, or gurus, the poet saints even applied it to God for a *sadguru* is regarded as a manifestation of God The Marāthā poet-saints frequently refer to the high moral qualities, the sincerity, the unselfishness, the unhypo critical spirit that marks a *sadguru* as distinguished from a false *guru*

Sādhana–The means employed to obtain deliverance from births and deaths and all that life implies in its sins and sorrows and even joys

Sādhu–A holy man a saint or sage one of subdued passions and of contemplative habits The poet saints give the word a moral emphasis hence a *sadhu* is a man of pure character, one truly devoted to God, a spiritually minded man a good man A man can appear hypocritically a *sadhu*, and not be a *sadhu* for a *sadhu* must be pure in heart and life The wandering professional *sadhu* called such, may or may not be sincere, but he is not considered a true *sadhu* without purity of heart and life

Saguna–See *Nirguna*

Samsāra–1 The world, mundane existence, human life, man's mortal state 2 The affairs of life, worldly

business, the vocations and engagements, the cares and troubles of secularity.

Sannyāsi–One who has cast off all worldly possessions, and carnal or natural affections, an ascetic The poet saints distinguish between the hypocritical, formal *Sannyasi*, who outwardly appears only to have given up all, and the true and sincere *Sannyāsi*, whose giving up of the world is genuine.

Santa–A saint practically synonymous with *sādhu* (which see) He is one who has lost worldly desires and devotes himself to the worship of God But whatever he may appear outwardly, no one is a *santa* without purity of heart and life The appellation *Kavi-santa*, or poet-saints, designate those saints who were poets. The Marāthā poet saints begin with Dnyāneshvar, about A D 1290, so far as their works are known, and continue to the present day

Satchidananda–Existence–intelligence–joy Although *Brahma* or the *paramātmā* cannot be described in human words (*avachya*) yet because it is believed to *exist*, to be that which takes the form of *intelligent beings*, and to express itself in beings feeling *joy*—*Brahma* being the substratum of these—this definition of *Brahma* is very frequently employed It should be noted that these three words, *existence*, *intelligence* and *joy*, are not adjectives but nouns They do not connote that *Brahma exists* is *intelligent* and *happy*, but that the one substance, *Brahma*, in taking form appears in the form of existing things, in the form of intelligent beings, and those possessing joy and goodness

Sāshtanga namaskāra–See *Namaskāra*

Sayujyatā–The fourth of the four states in which *mukti* (final deliverance) is distinguished, *viz*, absorption into the essence of *Brahma*. The four are *Sāyujyatā*

(absorption into the essence of *Brahma*), *Salokatā* (residence in the heaven of a particular deity), *Samipatā* (Nearness to the Deity), and *Sarūpatā* (Bearing the likeness of God)

Sāvadhāna–Literally attention, heed At the moment of marriage, the priests in solemn tone repeat the words, "*Sāvadhāna, sāvadhāna,*" and at that moment the curtain between the bride and bridegroom is removed, and the marriage is complete

Siddhi–A supernatural power or faculty supposed to be acquirable through the performance of certain magical, mystical or alchemical rites or processes Eight are enumerated, *viz*, *animā*, *mahimā*, *garimā*, *laghimā*, *prāpti*, *prakāmya*, *ishitva*, and *vashitva* The powers or *siddhis* are personified as female beings or *siddhis*, who come and serve those who by their austerities or otherwise gain those powers

Shrāddha–A kind of funeral rite or ceremony in honour of the departed spirits of dead relatives, observed with great strictness at various fixed periods, especial honour being given to paternal and maternal ancestors

Shūdra–The fourth grand division of the Hindu body, also an individual of it The four grand divisions are *Brahman* (the priestly caste), *Kshatriya* (the warrior, military, governing class), *Vaishya*, (agricultural and mercantile class), and *Shudra* (the servile class, whose duty is to serve the upper three) The *atishūdra* also called *anāmika*, and *antyaja*, are those still lower than the *Shūdra*, and outside of the four grand divisions Hence they are *asprishya* (Untouchable) or *anāmika* (Unmentionable)

Shānti–Peace Unruffled mind

Shloka–A verse, a stanza, a quantity of four lines. A particular metre; praise. In the Marathi commentaries the *Shloka* commented on is the Sanskrit text.

Shruti–The *Vedas* severally or collectively. The word is from the Sanskrit, meaning "hearing."

Skandha–A section of a book, a book, a chapter.

Stotra–1. Praise, panegyric, eulogium. 2. A book or writing in celebration of the praises; also a hymn.

Svāmi–A master or lord, the master or lord of, also the proprietor or owner of. Applied to the Deity, a god, a king, or prince, a spiritual preceptor, a husband, a holy personage, a learned Brahman, a *Gosāvī*, *Sānnyāsī*, etc. It is used also as a title, Keshavasvāmī.

T

Tapa–Religious austerity, pious mortification of the body. It is especially connected with the *yoga* system, and the *yogis* carry it to its extreme limit. But it also has less austere usage, meaning the duties of life, the special duties of Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shūdras It is therefore the correlative of *japa*, *japa* signifying the inner spiritual life, and *tapa* the outer religious life. (See *Japa*).

Tilaka–The spot or line made with coloured earths or unguents upon the forehead. It is considered either as an ornament or as a sectarial distinction.

Tirtha–1. A holy or sacred place, any place of pilgrimage, but especially particular spots along the course of sacred streams or in the vicinity of sacred springs. 2. A holy stream, or water brought from one. Water in which a Brahman, sannyāsī, etc., has dipped his foot, which has been poured over an idol; holy water.

Tulsi–A plant venerated by the Hindus, Holy Basil, Ocymum sanctum. It is usually grown in an earthen

altar before the door of the house, or in the garden behind the house. Its leaf is used in offerings, in garlands, and its stalks also have sacred uses Those worshipping the plant go around it, keeping it to the right (*pradakshinā*) with palm to palm, repeating a *mantra*, or prayer

U

Upanishad–The oldest philosophical literature

Upāsanā–Worship or religious service

V

Vaikuntha–The Heaven of Vishnu

Vairāgi–An ascetic or devotee, one who has subdued his worldly desires of passions The word is also applied to a class of religious mendicants The word is also pronounced *bairagi*. The poet saints distinguish between the true and the hypocritical *vairāgi*

Vairāgya–1 Absence of worldly desire or passion 2. Popularly, renunciation of all sensuous delight or gratification

Vastu–The real as opposed to the unreal, *Brahma*. The Universe, *Ātmā*, *Substance* The substance of which the Universe consists, namely *Brahma*

Vedas–The oldest of the Indian Scriptures The four Vedas are the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda* and the *Atharvaveda*.

Vidā–A roll of the leaf of Piper betel with Areca-nut, cloves, lime, etc It is usually chewed after a meal It is distributed to an audience after a *kirtana*, or any public assembly, and is the final act It is believed to be a digestive, and also as purifying the mouth. It is generally called *pāna-supari* (leaf supari nut). Many have the habit of chewing it constantly

Videhi-Literally, one without a body (*vi-deha*) In usage, however, it implies a temporary or permanent absorption of the mind in a way to make one unconscious of the possession of a body, as when one is intensely listening to a *kirtana*, he is for the time being a *videhi* Or when through a life of constant contemplation of the *atma* or of God, the ascetic or devotee loses all thought of his body, of cold or heat, hunger or thirst, desires or passions, he is a *videhi* A man is a *videhi* when the spiritual completely dominates the physical

Viveka-Right thinking To the Vedantist right-thinking is the discrimination between reality and unreality

W

Wada-1 A stately or large edifice, a mansion or palace 2 A division of a town, a quarter, a ward, as Brāhmanwādā, Mahārawāda. 3 An enclosed piece of meadowfield or garden ground, an enclosure 4 A cluster of huts of agriculturists, a hamlet.

Y

Yama-The god who rules over the spirits of the dead

Yoga-Spiritual or abstract devotion, union with *Brahma* through abstract meditation, or contemplation, also the practice or exercise of this sort o worship.

Yogabhrashta-One who was interrupted in his preceding birth during the performance of *Yoga* (abstract meditation upon *Brahma*) As an example, a pious outcaste devoted to Ekanātha is called a *Yogabhrashta* In the Autobiography of Bahinābāi a calf, because of its peculiar pious actions, is called a *yogabhrashta* Indeed any pious person can be described as *yogabhrashta* as one whose pious life in a former birth

was accidentally interrupted and has now a further opportunity.

Yogi–1. A performer of the abstract meditation called *yoga*. 2. An ascetic or devotee in general. Popularly a *yogi* is supposed to be able to gain extraordinary powers through his practice of *yoga*, called *siddhis* (which see), and the ash-covered *yogi* is able to instil much fear in the minds of the ignorant. The poet-saints, of course, distinguish between the hypocritical *yogi* and the true *yogi* whose heart and life must be pure.

Yojana–A measure of distance equal to four *kosa*, roughly about eight miles.